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ṚGVEDA DARŚANA

VOLUME 10

THE FIRST HYMN TO AGNI

Vidyālankāra

S. K. RAMACHANDRA RAO

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RGVEDA DARSANA

A SET OF THIRTEEN VOLUMES

VOLUME TEN

The First Hymn to Agni

Vidyalankara

Prof S. K. Ramachandra Rao

Prof S. K. Ramachandra Rao Memorial Trust®

Bangalore 560 011

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Phone: 080-26563957 E mail: profskr.trust@gmail.com

www.profskr.com

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Introduction

This volume in the series Rg Veda Darsana focuses attention on the first hymn of the Rg Veda Samhita, the *Agni Sukta* which was seen by the sage seer Madhucchandasa. This hymn is dealt with here in accordance with the traditional view that three-fold is the meaning of Vedic mantras: Adhi-yajna, Adhi-daiva and Adhyatma. For each of the nine mantras in the first sukta, these three view points with explanations have been given.

S. K. Ramachandra Rao

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

- (1) -

The word Veda has a mist of mystery hanging over it. Efforts are being made since early antiquity till our own day to clear the mist. But the efforts have served only to thicken the mist ! It is indeed very difficult to say what the Veda is all about. The word is well-known, and is universally acknowledged to represent something that is in the nature of ultimate authority. But there is no unanimity about the meaning or contents of this authority. The word Veda means many things to many people.

Apart from the lay folk, who are not only ignorant of, but indifferent to, what the Veda is about, the forerunners of the schools of philosophical thought and the founders of religious disciplines also accept Veda as valid and supreme but are divided in what it represents or signifies. Some suggest that the Veda is a book of rituals, others insist that it embodies knowledge, still others hold it is devotional in nature.

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Tradition itself assigns a mystery to Veda when it insists that it is unoriginated (anādi) and therefore everlasting (nitya), and that it is not the product of human reason or intelligence (apaurusheya). Further, tradition distinguishes between Veda as an abstract idea, representing God and God's word, breathed out by Godhead, and the Vedic corpus that is recited, studied and interpreted. The former satisfies truly all three characteristics of Veda : that it is infinite (anantā vai vedāh), *viz.* without limits, eternal (nitya) and the very breath of God (yasya niśvasitam vedāh). The latter, however, shares all the characteristics (merits and foibles) of a book, a literary work involving words of human origin (if not authorship) and the work of editing and compliling. It is therefore that it is described as 'samhitā'

There is an explanation available in tradition regarding the distinction mentioned above. Works of human origin (paurusheya or kṛtaka) make their appearance after they are produced (utpattyanantaram eva darśanam), while the Veda (paurusheya or kṛtaketara) is always there, has always been there, and will always be there (vedānām tu sarvadā), because it was not produced at any point of time or anywhere specifically.

The word Veda has the following shades of meaning, all of them etymologically justified and ideologically valid. We read in *Vyākaraṇa-Kārikā :*

सत्तायां विद्यते ज्ञाने वेत्ति विन्ते विचारणे ।
विन्दते विन्दति प्राप्तौ श्यन्-लुक्-स्नं-शेष्विदं क्रमात् ॥

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The word is formed from the root 'vid' or 'vidalṛ' by a grammatical rule 'halaś cha' (Pāṇini's *Ashṭādhyāyi,* 3,3,121) :

हलश्चेति सूत्रेण करणाधिकरणकारकयोर्घञ्प्रत्यये कृते
वेदशब्दः साध्यते ॥

(1) "to know", "to understand" (vida jñāne, *Dhātupāṭha,* 2,57; 'vidanti, jānanti')

(2) "to be", "to become" (vida sattāyām, *ibid.,* 4,60; 'bhavanti, vidyante')

(3) "to obtain", "to achieve" (vidalṛ lābhe, *ibid.,* 6,141; 'vindanti, vindante, labhanti, prāptau')

(4) "to inquire into", "to investigate" (vida vichāraṇe, *ibid.,* 7,13; 'vindate vichārayanti')

From the above, veda is a book of knowledge (1), it is eternal (nitya) (2), it is employed to secure the four objectives of life (purushārthas, dharma, artha, kāma and moksha), (3), and it is a mīmāmsā (4). *Bṛhat-prātiśākhya-vṛtti* begins by defining the Veda as that by which the four objectives of human existence are known and accomplished :

वेद्यन्ते ज्ञायन्ते लभ्यन्ते धर्मादिपुरुषार्था यैस्ते वेदाः ॥

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It should be noted that the word is used in the plural number (vedāh), to signify the Vedic corpus which is four-fold. Sāyaṇa in his *Kṛshṇa-yajurveda-bhāshya* gives another definition, using the word in its singular number, suggesting the idea of Veda as nitya, anādi and apaurusheya, and also as a book, which teaches a technique that is beyond the transactional world to accomplish what one desires and to eliminate what one dislikes.

इष्टप्राप्ति-अनिष्टपरिहारयोः अलौकिकमुपायं यो ग्रन्थो वेदयति स वेदः ॥

He elsewhere distinguishes it from the knowledge obtained from the normal methods of observation and reasoning :

प्रत्यक्षेणानुमित्या वा यस्तूपायो न बुध्यते ।
एतं विदन्ति वेदेन तस्माद्वेदस्य वेदता ॥

He also explains that it is the final pramāṇa (technique of getting valid knowledge), in contradistinction to observation or sensory apprehension (pratyaksha) and reasoning (anumāna). It is verbal testimony (śabda or āgama), employed where either observation or reasoning cannot provide correct knowledge. Among the three pramāṇas, pratyaksha (observation) is valid in all cases where the senses are competent to furnish infallible information. Where the senses fail to help us by providing information in any action that we set out to undertake, anumāna (inference, reasoning) is resorted to. It depends on pratyaksha. Where even this prmāṇa fails, then verbal testimony (śabda) alone is to be relied upon. Among the objectives

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of human existence, dharma (principles of effective life) is not comprehended by our observation, nor is it established by reason. Veda is what lets us know it. Likewise, moksha (emancipation from transactional bonds).

प्रत्यक्षानुमानागमेषु प्रमाणविशेषेषु अन्तिमो वेदः ॥

He also points out that Veda is the means of understanding correctly and completely by the strength of tradition what is not available for direct observation or reasoning

समयबलेन सम्यक् परोक्षानुभवसाधनं वेदः ॥

when he defines Veda as something that lets us know what is not known by other means, he means that which is not apprehended through normal human intelligence (anadhigatārtha-gantṛtvam vedatvam).

- (2) -

Udayana in his celebrated *Nyāya-kusumāñjali* makes the traditional position clear. Even when its origins are not known, the Veda is accepted as valid by all great ones

अनुपलभ्यमानमूलान्तरत्वे सति महाजनपरिगृहीतवाक्यत्वं वेदत्वम् ॥

The synonyms for Veda often employed in the early and mediaeval texts include expressions like 'śruti' (from 'śru', "to hear", that which is

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communicated by oral tradition, in a long line of teachers and students), 'āgama' (from 'gam', "to go", with ā "to come", that which has come down to us from a hoary past), 'nigama' (from "gam", "to go", that which has arrived among us well and close at hand), 'svādhyāya' (that which is repeated, recited or studied for ones own benefit), and 'āmnāya' (from 'mnā' abhyāse, that which is gone over repeatedly for the sake of perfect understanding).

The two traditional attributions to the Veda, of 'nityatva' (eternality) and 'apaurusheyatva' (not being a product of human effort, deliberation or intelligence) are interrelated. Veda is 'nitya' in the sense that its origin is coeval with creation, and that it will last as long as creation lasts. The word 'nitya' is derived from the root णश् अदर्शने (Dhātupāṭha 4,83) and has been defined in the *Vaiśeshika-sūtra* (4,1) as devoid of any cause or origination; it is not an effect. And therefore it has no disappearance (adarśane) or end.

सदकारणवन्नित्यम् ।।
(नित्यं च उत्पत्तिविनाशश्यारमतरत् ।।)

'Nityatva' is a grammatical concept pertaining to the everylasting character of sound which is the groundwork of language (of Pāṇini : सख्यं शिश्चीति भाषायाम् ।।; Kātyāyana-vārtika : प्रत्यये भाषायां नित्यम् ।।). Sound is eternal, but not so its articulation (ucchāraṇa). The Mīmāmsakas also hold to the doctrine of eternality of sound. It is eternal only in the sense that is not artificial (kṛtaketara), *viz.* man-made. Further, nityatva means what is constant and

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what does not change. It is another word for truth, reality (satya), not subject to human manipulations. This is also the idea behind 'apaurusheyatva'.

The idea of 'apaurusheya' significantly differentiates Veda from classical literature, which is 'man-made' (kṛtaka, paurusheya). The latter comprises of works derived from human minds (imagination thinking, reasoning, observation, fancy, and are therefore transactional in nature). It is described as 'laukika' (belonging to the world of human affairs). It is known to the gramma-rains as 'bhāshā (language employed in ordinary situations). It is distinguished from Vedic language, which is called 'chhandas'. In other words, the language of the Veda is not the Sanskrit that we know now.

Pāṇini points out numerous instances of how Vedic language differs markedly from the Sanskrit language in vogue. In Pāṇini's sūtras we repeatedly find the expression 'chhandasi' signifying Vedic usage, like

छन्दसि पर्व्यवहितवचनं च ॥ (1,4,80)
बहुलं छन्दसि ॥ (2,4,39; 2,4,73 and 76; 3,2,88; 5,2,122; 7,1,8; 7,3,97)

छन्दसि शायजपि ॥ (3,1,84)
छन्दसि लिट् ॥ (3,2,105)
क्याच्छन्दसि ॥ (3,2,170)
भवे छन्दसि ॥ (4,4,110)
नित्यम् छन्दसि ॥ (4,1,46)

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- (3) -

The point made by Pāṇini appears to be that the language of the Veda was not in fact a language in the usual sense of the term. It fulfills only half the function of a language, namely self-expression (hence called chhandas). It was not designed for communication or transaction (bhāshā). Chhandas has a double meaning : it means something that causes delight (chadi āhlādane) and what is concealed or hidden (chhad gūhane). Words used are delightful, but they hide the real intention. The latter is frequently referred to in Ṛgveda as "secret" (niṇya). The language of the Veda is highly symbolic. Words do not mean what they mean in common transaction. The hidden meaning becomes evident or known (vid vetti) only after reflection (vid vichāraṇe), after spiritual practice or tapas (vīndatī prāptau), and after one becomes himself the truth behind the meaning (vid sattāyām vidyate). Hence it is called Veda.

Veda is called chhandas because it conceals (Nirukta 7,312 छन्दांसि छादनात्) the vision of the sage : it also appears to please or gratify the deity (devatā) who is visualized (of RV-8,50,5 गूर्तयः पैरे छन्दयसे हवम् ॥; 10,27,8 समायन् कियदासु स्वपतिश्छन्दयाते ॥). The primary meaning of the word seems to be freedom, "according to ones desire", (cf. Pāṇini, 4,4,93). It is freedom to desire, to long for, to invite, to allure (cf. RV 6,11,3 विप्रो मधुच्छन्दो भवति रेभ इष्टौ ॥; 1,92,6 श्रियो छन्दो न स्मयते विभाती सुप्रताका ॥ 8,7,36 अग्निर्हि जानि पूर्व्यश्छन्दो न सूरो अर्चिषा ॥). It is also freedom from conventional fixity. The metrical forms

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which the seer's vision assumes are not only free, but are capable of conjuring up the image of the deity (devatā) invoked by the verse or hymn (RV, 10,14,16 त्रिष्टुब् गायत्री छन्दांसि सर्वा ता यम आहिता ॥).

The word chhandas is derived from chadi āhlādane dīptau cha (चन्देरादश्च छः इत्यौणादिकं सूत्रम् ४,२१९) *(Dhātu-pāṭha,* 1,56). Early references point out that the word signifies the gods themselves, for their activities are hidden *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa,* 8,2,2,8

छन्दाꣳसि वै देवाः वयुनाधाश्छन्दोभिर्हि इदꣳ
सर्वं वयुनं नद्धम् ॥ (वयुनः कर्म, सर्व क्रियाविद्यानिबन्धनाः ।)

Also 8,3,3,6

एता वै देवताश्छन्दाꣳसि ॥

In later literature, chhandas is so called because it removes miseries arising from ignorance, and it is covered over by pleasures –

अविद्यादि दुःखानां निवारणात् सुखैराच्छादनात् छन्दो वेदः ॥

The fourteen varieties of chhandas used most often in the Rgvedic corpus represent different methods employed to cause delight and conceal the real intent behind the words. And the chhandas is known by the number of letters in a verse, and the number of lines (pādas) in which they are arranged.

Gāyatri for instance is the first and most celebrated of the varieties, consisting of 24 letters in three lines. The number twenty-four (tattvas)

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represents eight significant dimensions (ashṭā-vasu) in each of three realms, earth (bhūh), midregion (bhuvah, antariksha) and sky (svah, dyauh). The three realms symbolize the three major forms of the diety, Agni on earth, Vāyu in the midregion and Āditya in the sky. The meaning of the mantra is to be elucidated on this basis. Of the major varieties of chhandas, the first seven are most significant :

1. Gāyatri (24 letters)
2. Ushṇik (28 letters)
3. Anushṭup (32 letters)
4. Bṛhatî (36 letters)
5. Trishṭup (44 letters)
7. Jagatī (48 letters)
8. Ati-jagati (52 letters)
9. Śakvarī (56 letters)
10. Ati-śakvarī (60 letters)
11. Ashṭī (64 letters)
12. Atyashṭī (68 letters)
13. Dhṛti (72 letters)
14. Ati-dhṛtī (76 letters)

The most frequently employed *chhandas* in Ṛgveda is Trishṭup, with four pādas and eleven letters in each pāda. The number eleven symbolizes the forms of prāṇa as Indra, ten organs (five organs of sense and five organs of action, indriyas) and mind (internal organ). The four pādas are the three

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realms mentioned above (bhūh, bhuvah and svah) and the transcendental realm (mahah), the realm beyond (turya, the fourth). All the pādas are contained within the human body (hence adhyātma). Numerically Trishṭup is followed by Gāyatri, and then comes Jagatī.

- (4) -

Now for the related idea of 'apaurusheyatva'. *Shaḍvimśa-brāhmaṇa* takes the expression to mean merely 'not made by man'. But the implications are more profound. The Naiyāyikas hold that the Veda is revealed by God, it is the word of God, made by God (īśvara-kṛta), and some of the Vedāntins subscribe to this line of thought when they regard the veda as the breath of God (यस्य निश्वसितं वेदाः ।). God breathed out the Veda as effortlessly and as naturally as a man breathes. But the early mīmāmsakas do not accept this position. Kumārila, for instance, argues in his *Śloka-vārtika* that the Veda is apaurusheya only in the sense of its author being never known or remembered by any one, पुरुषस्य कर्तुरस्मरणात् ।)

Pānini and the Vārtika-kāra show the difference between what is 'uttered' (prokta) and what is 'made' (kṛta) (4,3,10 तेन प्रोक्तम् 1 and 4,3,16 कृते ग्रन्थे ।). The former expression suggests a divine revelation, while the latter signifies human intervention (or dependent revelation). The sages (ṛshis) are involved in the Vedic corpus, sometimes as 'makers of mantras' as in *Taittirīya-brāhmaṇa* 2,8,8,5

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यामृषयो मन्त्रकृतो मनीषिणः ।
अन्वैच्छन् देवास्तपसा श्रमेण ॥

But more often they, are described as the ones who perceived the mantras that were already there (mantra-drashṭārah). Their especial eligibility for this remarkable prowess comes from austerity and penance (tapas), which render them more than merely human (apaurusheya). They are able to reveal to others what has been revealed to themselves. This is of course secondary revelation, signified by the expression 'prokta'. But if they produce the mantras on their own, on the basis of what was revealed to them, they are said to 'make' the mantras ('kṛta').

There is a mantra in *Ṛgveda* (35,2), where the sage-seer Gṛtsamada speaks of the mantras being "chiselled" in the heart :

इमं स्वस्मै हृद आ सुतष्टं मन्त्रं
वोचेम कुविदस्य वेदत् ।

अस्मै (देवाय) इमं मन्त्रं हृद (हृदयात्) सु (सुष्ठु) तष्टं (निर्मितम्) सु आ (आभिमुख्येन) वोचेम (ब्रवाम) । अस्य (अस्माभिरुक्तं इमं मन्त्रम्) कुवित् (बहुलम्) वेदत् (जानातु) ॥

This is what Yāska would describe as a 'paroksha' (indirect) eulogy. The mantra is addressed to the devatā Agnī 'apām napāt', who is not right in front of the seer. The deity is the one for whom the mantra is meant to please (asmai). And the deity is begged to understand the import of the

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mantra perfectly well (kuvit asya vedat). And the seer imagines that he is articulating the mantra, along with other seers (vochema), as if the deity is before him (su ā). And the mantra itself is well-made (sutashṭam), carved, chiselled by (or in) the heart (hṛdah). Here the mantra is both 'kṛta' and 'prokta', and the maker himself is the reciter.

The significant expression here is 'hṛt', where (or by which) the mantra is prepared. The poet-seer is aware of the mantra taking shape in his own heart (viz. mind), and he now proposes to give expression to it in words (by speaking out the mantra). The previous mantra explicitly refers to the seer-sage as the one who speaks out (girah, gṛṇāti iti, stotā), and it says clearly that the mantra was created by him (upa asṛkshi, upāsṛjāmi, utpādayāmi). Further, it points out that the deity (Agni) accepts with joy this mantra (sah joshisat).

It becomes evident from this mantra that the distinction between 'kṛta' and 'prokta' is not a marked one, although 'kṛta' precedes 'prokta'. There is another mantra in *Ṛgveda* (7,7,6), which is even more interesting :

एते द्युम्नेभिर्विश्वमातिरन्त मन्त्रं
ये वारं नर्या अतक्षन्।
प्र ये विशस्तिरन्त श्रोषमाणा
आ ये मे अस्य दीधयन्नृतस्य ॥

ये नर्याः (मनुष्याः) अरं (पर्याप्तं) मन्त्रं अतक्षन् (समस्कुर्वन्) ये विशः (जनाः) श्रोषमाणाः प्र तिरन्त (वर्धयन्ति), ये वा ऋतस्य अस्य (सत्यमिमं

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अग्निं) आ दीधयन् (आदीपयन्), एते (पुरुषाः) द्युम्नेभिः विश्वं प्रतिरन्त (वर्धयन्ति) ॥

There are three classes of people (naryā) mentioned here: (1) those who carve out (chisel) the mantras perfectly well within themselves (ye aram mantram atakshan); (2) those who articulate them, thus communicating them to others (ye viśah śroshamāṇāh); and (3) those understand aright the import of the mantras or significance of the true spirit underlying the creation and articulation of the mantras (ye vā ṛtasya asya ādīdhayan). All these three classes contribute to the nourishment of the world by enlightenment (ete dynmnebhih viśvam pratiranta). The first two classes represent the 'kṛta' and 'prokta' respectively. It is also to be noted that the second of these two classes is qualified by the expression 'viśah', which means "common people". They do not make the mantras themselves but listen to others who articulate them (śroshamāṇāh) and give currency to the mantras. The third group of people perceives the excellence and veracity of the mantras and make their lives full of light. The mantra is thus created (kṛta), articulated (prokta) and heard or received (śruta). Those who are responsible for all these aspects of the mantra are only human beings (naryā, manushyāh).

The three aspects mentioned here are related to the distinction between 'apaurusheya', 'ardha-paurusheya' and 'paurusheya'. The Veda being described as 'apaurusheya' (not produced by the human mind) refers to the formation of the mantras in the hearts of sages, and such formation is totally free from the limitations of the human mind. This is what is referred to as

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'hṛda ā sutashṭam' and 'atakshan'. In other words, the mantras appeared in the human heart on their own, as if by divine impulsion. They are expressions of truth (ṛtasya). The sages only saw them in their own hearts (mantra-drashṭārah). This is what makes the ṛshi (darśanāt). The Veda is 'apaurusheya' in this sense.

The second expression 'ardha-paurusheya' refers to the prehension of the mantras by the sages, who although not the carvers of the mantras, were the custodians of these mantras, having been entrusted by an oral tradition (śroshamāṇāh). They are also described as 'Śrutarshi'. These sages are not ordinary people; they live austerely, perform penances, and receive the 'intimations of immortality' from deep within themselves.

The third expression 'paurusheya' signifies that the sages themselves make the mantras, on the basis of their experiences and observations, and with limited aspirations. For instance, the 'Dāna-stutis' in *Ṛgveda,* where the sage merely eulogizes the givers of gifts; donors and rulers. There can be nothing of universal significance or mystery (niṇya) about them.

\- (5) -

Interesting in this context is the three-fold classification of sage-seers (ṛshis) : (1) ṛshi, the sages like Viśvāmitra and Vasishṭha, (2) ṛshi-putra, the sons and others in the family of the ṛshis, like Madhuchchhandas and Jetā

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who were son and grandson respectively of Viśvāmitra, or Śakti and Parāśara, who were son and grandson of Vasiṣhṭha respectively; and (3) ṛshika, the ṛshi-like sages of lesser eminence (alpārthe ka-pratyayah). There is a fourth variety of ṛshis called Svayambhū, who were identical with the deities in the mantras (corresponding with the ādhyātmika variety of mantras in Yāska), which is not relevant for us here.

Every one of the mantras included in the *Ṛgveda-samhitā* has a ṛshi associated invariably with it; there can be no mantra without a ṛshi. How then can all the mantras in the Veda be described as apaurusheya in the strict sense of the term ? The vision indeed is more important than the sage who has that vision. Does every mantra contain this vision as the primary element ? There are mantras which embody the experiences and observations of individual sages, and do not suggest the exclusive presence of a vision. It would appear that such of the mantras as do not involve a vision (darśana) primarily would belong to the ardha-paurusheya variety. They have the value of secondary revelation. The obvious difference between Viśvāmitra's well-known Gāyatri (3,62,10) and the hymn of Madhuchchandas to Agni (1,1,1ff.) is relevant in the context. The former is 'apaurusheya' while the latter is 'ardha-paurusheya'.

As indicated above, the dāna-stutis are illustrations of the 'paurusheya' *(10,107,2-9)* variety of mantras. Thus, the entire Vedic corpus is not apaurusheya or nitya. The core of the Ṛgvedic corpus is apaurusheya, and

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some mantras belong to the 'prokta' variety and others to the 'kṛta' (ardha-paurusheya and paurusheya respectively).

Now must be discussed another traditional detail, that of what the original Veda was like. It has already been mentioned that tradition makes a distinction between Veda as an abstract idea (used in the singular number) and the Vedic corpus (three or four Vedas). The former is described as the original Veda (mūla-veda), regarded by the Naiyāyikas as the word of God (īśvara-kṛti), and by some of the later Mīmāmsakas as the mandate arising from divine source (ājñā-śakti of īśvara). This was supposed to be in the nature of an undistinguished mass (rāśi) of eulogies (ṛchah), ritualistic prescriptions (nigada, from 'gad' uchchāraṇe, divine articulations, later called yajus) and chantings (sāman).

The three ingredients of the original Veda were all in the nature of mantras which were articulations concerning hidden principles (from 'matri gupta-paribhāshaṇe', *Dhātu-pāṭha,* 10,149, अस्माद्धलश्च इति सूत्रेण Pāṇini, 3,3,121 घञ् प्रत्यये कृते ॥). The root मन् ज्ञाने । *(Dhātu-pāṭha,* 4,65) is also given (अस्माद्धातोः सर्वधातुभ्यः ष्ट्रन् इत्युणादि सूत्रेण, Uṇādikosha, 4,159 ष्ट्रन् प्रत्यये कृते ॥). Mantra is that which makes us reflect on the true nature of things; it consists of musings (मन्यन्ते ज्ञायन्ते सत्याः पदार्थाः यस्मिन् ।). The mantras assume the form of chhandas, stoma (ṛcha), yajus (ritualistic statements) and sāman (ṛchas in the form of laudatory chanting).

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मन्त्रा मननाच्छन्दांसि छादनात्।
स्तोमः स्तवनाद्यजुर्यजतेः।
सामा संमितमृचा॥

Also –

ऋग्भिः स्तुवन्ति यजुभिर्यजन्ति सामभिर्गायन्ति॥
(ऋच स्तुतौ। *(Dhātupāṭha,* 6,19)
(यज देवपूजा सङ्गतिकरणदानेषु॥ *ibid.,* 1,728)
(साम सान्त्वप्रयोगे, *ibid.,* 10,304); साम सान्त्वने, *Kshīrataraṅgiṇī* 10,265 from षो अन्तकर्मणि। *Dhātu-pāṭha,* 4,38)

The profound mystic understandings (ṛcha, of the nature of 'veda', "to know"), the worshipful approaches (yajus or nigada) and the ecstatic articulations (sāman) are all indistinguishably involved in the original Veda, which alone can be described as 'apaurusheya' and 'nitya'. The supposition is that 'atharvāṅgirasa' is also involved in this mass :

थर्वतिश्चरति कर्मा, तत्प्रतिषेधः॥ *(Nirukta, 11,18)*

The Atharvan is the negation of 'tharvan' which means shaking or doubts (चर संशये, *Dhātupāṭha,* 10,214). Atharvan strictly means 'eliminating doubts', 'being firm and unshaken'.

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- (6) -

Notwithstanding these diverse strands, the original Veda was one, undivided. It was spontaneous. It was apaurusheya in the sense that it was totally bereft of human intervention. Mortal intelligence and reasoning had no role to play. It was knowledge (vid jñāne), revelations concerning the supreme reality. It was also an attempt to dive deep into the mysteries of existence (vid vichāraṇe). It was to make life fulfilled and meaningful (vidalṛ lābhe). It was focussed on being (vid sattāyām), on becoming one with the real. It thus satisfied all the nuances of meaning for the word Veda. Being one, it was many (सर्वमेकं पुराऽभवत्) And the many were not spelt out (avibhaktam), all were merged in one, without interruption or discrimination (nirantara).

This was so in the very first of the ages, Kṛta; but in the subsequent age, Tretā, this undistinguished mass was accommodated in three distinct groups, each called a Veda.

एको वेदः कृते ह्यासीत्
त्रेतायां स त्रिधाऽभवत् ॥

This wās done by collecting all the ṛchas (mystic understandings) in one place, all the yajus formulae (nigada) in another and all the sāman chants in still another. Thus there came about three Vedas. This three-fold classification was by no means apaurusheya; it was 'made' by the sages (ṛshi-kṛta). It was

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therefore described as the stage of secondary Vedas (upaveda). The division of the one Veda into three Vedas was obviously prompted by 'viniyoga' or the purpose to which the Veda could be pressed :

ऋग्भिः स्तुवन्ति । यजुभिर्यजन्ति । सामभिर्गायन्ति ॥

The context was the sacrificial rite (yajña), in which the gods are eulogized by the ṛchas (ऋच्यन्ते स्तूयन्ते देवाः अनया ।) and worshipped by the yajus; and in certain sequences the priest raises his voice and sings the praises by sāmans.

At the end of the third great period, Dvāpara-age, the three fold upaveda appears to have got lost or become obsolete (utsanna). However, the great epic sage Kṛshṇa by name, recovered the Vedic corpus and arranged it in four books. He was also called Dvaipāyana, beause he was born in an island. He became better celebrated as Vyāsa or Veda-vyāsa (the redactor of the Vedic corpus). He not only classified the Veda in terms of 'viniyoga' into four Vedas (विव्यास चतुरो वेदान् ।), but also communicated the four divisions to his four disciples : Ṛgveda to Paila, Yajurveda to Vaiśampāyana, Sāma-veda to Jaimini, and Atharva-veda to Sumantu.

Charaṇa-vyūha explains that the mass of Vedic texts was so immense that it was impossible for anyone to commit the entirety to memory, much less study it in detail. It also mentions that Veda-vyāsa redacted it into four divisions in order to preserve the Vedic tradition in the best interest of the people –

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पूर्वं भगवता कृष्णद्वैपायनेन जगदुपकारार्थं एकीभूयस्थिता वेदा व्यस्ताः ॥

And the earlier enumeration of the Vedic triad (trayī) is also widely accepted. *Manu-smṛti* (3,7) speaks of the need to study properly three, two or at least one of the Vedas, before becoming a householder :

वेदानधीत्य वेदौ वा वेदं वापि यथाक्रमम् ।
अविप्लुतब्रह्मचर्यो गृहस्थाश्रममाविशेत् ॥

The same text points out that the division of one Veda into three was only to facilitate the performance of rituals (1,23) :

अग्निवायुरविभ्यस्तु त्रयं ब्रह्म सनातनम् ।
दुदोह यज्ञसिद्ध्यर्थं ऋग्यजुःसामलक्षणम् ॥

According to Ānanda-tīrtha, the Vedic wisdom was in a state of confusion during the Dvāpara-age, the Supreme Spirit appeared as Vyāsa and presented it in four divisions :

द्वापरे सर्वत्र ज्ञाने आकुलीभूते तन्निर्णयाय...भगवान् नारायणः व्यासत्वेन अवततार । अथ इष्टानिष्टप्राप्तिपरिहारेच्छूनां तद्योगमविजानतां तज्ज्ञापनार्थं वेदमुत्सन्नं व्यञ्जयन् चतुर्धा व्यभजत् ॥

There is also a mention of how this 'avāntara-veda' was prepared. The procedure adopted is technically known as 'avāpa' (insertion) and 'udvāpa' (ejection) of mantras in the collection. The method clearly is applicable to

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the text which is not fully apaurusheya. The next stage is the formation of 'śākhās' in the avāntara-veda texts. A śākhā here does not mean a branch but a recension. Each śākhā is complete by itself. It was mentioned earlier that Kṛshṇa-Dvaipāyana-Vyāsa taught Paila the *Ṛgveda,* Vaiśampāyana the Yajurveda, Jaimini the Sāma-veda and Sumantu the Atharva-veda. The Vedas continued in the lines of these sages, their disciples crystallizing the śakhās. Thus in course of time Ṛgveda came to have twenty-one recensions (Patañjali says एकविंशतिधा बाह्वृचम् ।), Yajurveda a hundred recensions (एकशतमाध्वर्युशाखाः ।), Sāmaveda a thousand recensions (सहस्रवर्त्मा सामवेदः ।), and Atharva-veda nine (recensions ह्वृ नवाथर्वणो वेदः ।). The Vedic recensions became truly numerous :

मूलवेदश्चोपवेद तथाऽवान्तर एव च ।
शाखोपशाखा भेदेन वेदोऽनेकधा मतः ॥

For instance, Paila, who received Ṛgveda from his teacher, Vyāsa, taught it to two of his disciples Indra-pramati and Bāshkala. Thus there were two recensions already. Indra-pramati had a disciple Māṇḍūkeya, who prepared his own recension. His disciple was Satyaśravāh, who had Satyahita as his disciple. Satyāśraya, who was his student, had three students each of whom had his own recension : Devamitra-Śākalya, Rathītara-Śākapūṇi, Bāshkali-Bhāradvāja. Devamitra's students prepared their own recensions : Mudgala, Gālava, Khāliya, Vātsya and Śaiśiri.

The recensions that thus came into existence had the same content and form, but there were textual variations and differences in the order of mantras

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and sūktas. For instance, the Śākala recension (which we now widely use) recites Kutsa's mantras after the mantras of Gautama, while in the Bāshkala recension, we have after Gautama's mantras the mantras of Kākshīvat and then the mantras of Kutsa. Some sūktas which are regarded as additional (khila) in one recension appear in another recension not so. In the Śānkhyāyana recension, the well-known Vālakhilya-sūktas are a part of the text, whereas in the Śākala recension they appear as 'addendum' (pariśishṭa).

In course of time, the recensions (śākhās) were responsible for numerous secondary recensions (upaśākhā). *Skanda-purāṇa* mentions that the four main divisions of the Veda had twenty-four recensions, which in time gave rise to a hundred, and later a thousand –

चतुर्धा व्यभजन्तांश्च चतुर्विंशतिधा पुनः ।
शतधा चौकधा तथैव च सहस्रधा ॥

We read in *Bhāgavata* –

एवं ऋषयो वेदं स्वं स्वं व्यस्यन्ननेकधा ।
शिष्यैः प्रशिष्यैः वेदास्ते शाखिनोऽभवन् ॥

In the additional section of Atharva-veda, seven recensions of *Ṛgveda* are enumerated : Āśvalayana, Śānkhāyana, Sādhyāyana, Śākala, Bāshkala, Audumbara and Māṇḍūka. But usually five recensions are frequently mentioned : Śākala (or Śākalya), Bāshkala, Āśvalāyana, Śāṇkhāyana and

Māṇḍukeya. Along with Devamitra - Śākala's recension was amalgamated another recension by Śaiśiri (student of Devamitra), and we have now the Śākala-Śaiśiri recension as our standard *Ṛgveda-samhitā* text which is described as 'ṛgvedāmnāya'. Śākala's son and disciple Śākalya prepared the pada-pāṭha for the mantras of this *Samhitā* . A reference in *Śaiśiri-śikshā* says that both Śākalya and Śaiśiri were students of a sage called Śaunaka and were responsible for their own secondary recensions, as Śaunaka's other students Mudgala, Gālava and Gārgya did.

Śaunaka's *Anuvākānukramaṇī* has this reference :

ऋग्वेद शैशिरीयां संहितायां यथाक्रमम् ।
प्रमाणमनुवाकानां सूक्तैः श्रुणुत शाकलाः ॥

(शिशिरनाममहर्षि प्रोक्तायां शाकल्यस्य संहितायाम् । निबोधनं प्रतिपादनम् ।
शास्त्रं उक्तं हि प्रमाणं बोधने यत्तामर्यादाशास्त्रहेतुषु सम्यग्वक्तुं च ॥

We can thus see how far removed the avilable Ṛgvedic recension is from the original veda (mūla-veda). We can also see the role of the sages who were responsible for numerous recensions that appeared during the interval. The Śākhā-vedas were clearly due to the effort of individual sages. We have preserved the names of these sages : in fact, the sākhās are named after the sages. Now does, in this situation, the description of Veda as apaurusheya stand ? We need to remind ourselves that the Mīmāmsakas understood by apaurusheya the fact that who the authors of the Veda were is totally

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forgotten (kartur asmaraṇāt). Can we say that the present Veda, the śākhā-veda, is ardha-paurusheya or paurusheya while the mūla-veda alone is apaurusheya ? The heterodox description is that there were human authors of the Veda (vedasya kartārah).

It is true that even in the intermediary stage of avāntara-veda there were insertions (āvāpa) and ejections (udvāpa). But tradition denies that insertion meant introduction of man-made material into the Vedic corpus. It only means that the mantras that were elsewhere in the same corpus were inserted here (sthānāntarasthānām ṛchām tatra avāntara-vede āvāpah, sthāpanam). Likewise, ejection is ignoring or omitting in the avāntara-veda some of the mantras that were included in the Upa-veda (upaveda-gatānām ṛchām udvāpah avāntara-vedeshu parityāgah). It is also mentioned that some people hold that insertions and ejections were effected in the intermediary stage only to abbreviate the Vedic corpus that was infinite and limitless :

वेदानन्तत्वविज्ञस्या आवापोद्वापाभ्यां संक्षेपः कृतः ।।

This view, of course, is not universally accepted. But there was no doubt a difference between the original Veda and the intermediary Veda in form. There was, however, no question of transplanting the original Veda (apaurusheya) with a man-made (paurusheya) Veda. The inherent character of nityatva and apaurusheyatva was never forsaken in the upaveda, avantara-veda or śākhā-veda. The content and the form of the original mantras continued unaltered, although their arrangements underwent changes owing

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to the judgement of sages who made recensions. Human intelligence, reasoning and effort were directed only to classify, systematize, group and edit the mantras. Notwithstanding the division of the Vedic corpus and multiple recensions, the spirit of the mūla-veda survives. All Veda speaks but one language. The sage-seers, all of them, about three hundred of them, have but one vision of reality or existence (ekam sat), although their expressions, manners and idioms differed.

Sri Aurobindo was right when he wrote : "The Ṛgveda is one in all its parts. Whichever of its ten Maṇḍalas we choose, we find the same substance, the same ideas, the same images, the same phrases. The Ṛishis are the seers of a single truth and use in its expression a common language" *(The Secret of The Veda,* Pondicherry Edition of 1993, p. 54).

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It is important to remember that the mantras in the Vedic corpus (whether mūla-veda or śākhā-veda) were intimately and invariably associated with seer-sages (ṛshis). The mantras were revealed to the ṛshis, and the ṛshis by definition were seers of the mantras (mantra-drashṭārah).

The entire Indian culture, in fact, with all its religious denominations and philosophical inclinations is ultimately traceable to the sage-seers (ṛshis), who made their first appearance in the *Ṛgveda-samhitā.* They represent the possibility of normal human constitution being transformed into a personality

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of extraordinary intuition, vision and accomplishment. All the great masters in Indian tradition, whatever be the field, are ṛshis. The Buddha, Mahāvīra, Vyāsa, the Siddhas, the Yogis, the mystic saints, the exponents of darśanas, and the āchāryas were all ṛshis, and they represent alike the ṛshi culture, which has achieved unity amidst diversity in this country. A ṛshi is defined in *Bṛhaddevatā* as one who has direct experience of reality (ऋषिभिस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः । introduction, 10). Who now is a ṛshi ? From the root ऋ प्रापे गत्यां; ऋष् गतौ *(Dhātu-pātha* 28,7) meaning "to go", "to move", "to rise upward", "to reach", "to obtain", we have words like अर्षति ('pushes forward'), आनर्ष ('thrust out'), अर्षिता ('flows out quickly'), इयर्ति ('rises upward'), ऋच्छति ('goes'), अरिष्यति and so on, all of which become relevant for the word ṛshi (ऋष् + इगुपधात् कित् *Uṇādi-sūtra* 4,119 इन् किच्च ।), the primary meaning of it being "seing" (darśanāt), or knowing. In fact, it has been suggested that the original root was 'dṛś' ("to see"), which was changed to 'ṛsh'. We have in RV, expressions like ऋषिकृत् (1,31,6 "causing to see"), ऋषिमनस् (9,96,18, "the seeing mind", perceptive thought), ऋषिवत् (10,66,14; 8,2,28, "like unto one who sees"), ऋषिष्टुत (7,75,5, "praised by intently perceiving") and so on. ऋषति प्राप्नोति सर्वान्मन्त्रान् ज्ञानेन, पश्यति संसारपारं वा ॥ There is another derivation from ऋषि हिंसायां which results in words like ऋष्टि (ऋष् + क्तिन्). Here, the word is used in the sense of negating the world of appearance and getting enlightened (dīpti, e.g. 1,66,4; 5,52,6; 1,64,4 and 3,54,13). *Matsya-purāṇa* (chapter 120) has the following verses on the etymological details of the word :

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ऋषि हिंसागतौ धातुर्विद्यासत्यतपःश्रुतिः ।
एष सन्निचयो यस्माद् ब्राह्मणश्च ततस्तृषिः ॥
विवृत्तिसमकालं तु बुद्ध्या व्यक्तिमृषिस्त्वयम् ।
ऋषन्ते परमां यस्मात् परमर्षिस्ततः स्मृतः ॥
गत्यर्थादृषतेर्धातोर्नाम निर्वृतिकारणम् ।
यस्मादेष स्वयंभूतस्तस्माच्च ऋषिता मता ॥

The root *ṛsh* signifies several things : knowledge, truth, austerity and Veda; ṛshi is one in whom all these meanings are collected. And the enumeration of several classes of ṛshis in *Trikāṇḍa-śesha* is also interesting in the context :

१) व्यासाद्या महर्षयः ।
२) भेलाद्या परमर्षयः ।
३) कण्वादयो देवर्षयः ।
४) वसिष्ठाद्या ब्रह्मर्षयः ।
५) सुश्रुताद्या श्रुतर्षयः ।
६) ऋतुपर्णादयो राजर्षयः ।
७) जैमिन्याद्या काण्डर्षयः ॥

Vyāsa, the redactor of the Veda and the classifier of Veda into four divisions, is an illustration of maharshis (great sages); there are also paramarshis (supreme sages) like Bhela; devarshis (divine sages) like Kaṇva; brahmarshis (sages who are realized and enlightened) like Vasishṭha; śrutarshis (sages who became enlightened after listening to the enlightened sages) like

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Suśruta; rājarshis (rulers who are also sages) like Ṛtuparṇa; and kāṇḍarshis (sages responsible for scriptural divisions) like Jaimini. We read in the *Ratnakosha* that there is a hierarchy among the ṛshis : the brahmarshi is on top, followed by devarshi, maharshi, paramarshi, kāṇḍarshi śrutarshi and rājarshi in order

सप्त सप्त ब्रह्मर्षि देवर्षि महर्षि परमर्षयः ।
काण्डर्षिश्च श्रुतर्षिश्च राजर्षिः क्रमावराः ॥

A ṛshi is distinguished by his austerities (tapas), which enable him to 'see' the mantras. When it is said that the Veda does not present itself directly to one who is not a ṛshi or one who has not engaged himself in austerities (न प्रत्यक्षमस्ति अनृषेश्तपसो वा), Veda is revealed to a ṛshi or by tapas. And in the Vedic collection (10,109,4) the seven ancient ṛshis are said to have settled down in tapas

देवा एतस्तामवदन्त पूर्वे सप्तऋषयस्तपसे
ये निषेदुः ॥

Another seer (10,154,2) recounts that by tapas one becomes untouched by sin and reach the supreme abode

तपसा ये अनाधृब्योस्तपसा ये स्वर्ययुः ।
तपो ये चक्रिरे महः तांश्चिदेवापि गच्छतात् ॥

Yet another seer says that it is by tapas, that reality and cosmic law are reached, and that the tapas is the creative force (10,190,1) :

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ऋतं च सत्यं चाभीद्धात् तपसोऽ ध्यजायत।
ततो रात्र्यजायत ततः समुद्रो अर्णवः ॥

Tapas purifies, and makes everything lucid, evident and meaningful. It is what projects before us the truth of the supreme void (दधाति परमे व्योमन्। 10,109,4). It is by engaging oneself in tapas that Prajāpati creates all this *(Taittirīya-āraṇyaka,* 8, 6 तपस्तप्त्वेदं सर्वमसृजत।) The word 'tapas' primarily means production of heat, consumption in fire, voluntary distress or burning (तप उपतापे; सन्तापे *Dhātupāṭha,* 26,50). It is in this sense also that *Ṛgveda* makes reference to the man burning (7,104,15 वायुस्ततप पुरुषस्य।), man being excited and agitated (10,34,11 स्त्रियं दृष्ट्वाय कितवं तताप।) the heart burning (10,95,17 तिष्ठन्नि वर्तस्व हृदयं तप्यते मे।) and so on. It is not merely getting hot or burning. It is rising to a higher level of activity and perception, by creating a unifying fervour within oneself. It transforms an ordinary person into an extraordinary being. It induces a special state of mind and heart. *Muṇḍaka-upanishad* (1,19) points out that tapas produces direct knowledge of reality (यस्य ज्ञानमयं तपः।). While meditating on the supreme reality taught by the Veda, one contemplates on the teaching all the time uninterruptedly, sitting, standing or lying down. We read in *Āpastamba-sūtra* (1,4,12,2) :

तत्र श्रूयते। स यदि तिष्ठन्नासीनःशयानो वा स्वाध्यायमधीते
तप एव तत्तप्यते। तपो हि स्वाध्याय इति।

Another causative factor for the ṛshi is the grace of the supreme spirit (bhagavat-prasāda), which makes manifest all aspects of knowledge to a

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person who has himself not made any study. When such a one perceives a mantra, he is regarded as the ṛshi of that mantra

> यथा यः स्वयं अध्ययनेन विनैव यद्वाक्यं पश्यति स तस्य
> वाक्यस्यर्षिः प्रकीर्तितः ।....तथाभूतो हि स्वयं प्रतिभानविद्याकल्प
> एव भवेत् ।
> न हि अन्यः एतावन्मात्रेणाध्ययनेन सर्वविद्याः प्रतिपत्तुं शक्नोति ।
> ब्रह्माद्यास्तु भगवत्प्रसादात् स्वयं प्रतिभाताखिलविद्याः सकृदधीतवन्तः
> इति ऋषित्वं तेषामुपपन्नमिति भावः ।। (ऋग्भाष्यटीका ।।)

- (9) -

Ānanda-tīrtha has this to say in his *Ṛgbhāshya* (sūkta one, and varga three, introductory portion, upodghāta)

> मुनिस्तु सर्वविद्यानां भगवान्पुरुषोत्तमः ।
> विशेषतश्च वेदानां यो ब्रह्माणमिति श्रुतिः ।
> ....
> प्रोवाच ब्रह्मणे विद्या हृदिस्थो बादरायणः ।
> ओंकारपूर्विका विद्याः प्रेरयत्यखिलेस्वपि ।।
> सदैव ब्रह्मणे पूर्वमिति सात्वतसंहिता ।
> सकृन्निगदमात्रेण गृहीतं ब्रह्मणाखिलम् ।।
> अन्तर्गतस्य व्यासस्य प्रसादान्नित्यशक्तितः ।
> तेन चानन्तशक्तित्वाद्युगपत्समीरितम् ।।

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प्रथमप्रतिपत्तृत्वान्मुनिर्ब्रह्माखिलस्य च ।
सुपर्णोऽखिलवेदानां पञ्चरात्रस्य नागराट् ॥
द्वितीयप्रतिपत्तृन्मुनित्वे संप्रकीर्तितौ ।
यः पश्यति स्वयं वाक्यं स ऋषिस्तस्य कीर्तितः ॥

....

ऋचामृषिस्ततः शक्रो यजुषां सूर्य एव च ॥
सोमः साम्नां तृतीयास्ते प्रतिपत्तार ईरिताः ।
अथर्वाङ्गिरसामग्निरेकर्षिश्चाप्यथर्वणाम् ॥
इत्युक्ताः समुदायस्य सन्त्यन्ये च पृथक् पृथक् ॥

This account crystallizes the traditional view regarding the status of the Vedic corpus, as documented in the Purāṇas and Samhitās. It also includes a hierarchy of sage-seers, from the original revelation to the extant Vedic corpus. The primordial manifestation of the wisdom enshrined in the Veda was due to the Supreme Spirit, Vishṇu (meaning the all-pervasive principle, the Vedāntic Brahman), who is termed the ṛshi (for he saw the Vedic mantras originally). What was perceived thus comprehended all the aspects of knowledge (sarva-vidyā), relevant to human transactions (paurusheya) and to the spiritual perfection (apaurusheya, *viz.* the Veda). Vyāsa, a form of Vishṇu, who abided in the heart of the creator Brahmā, revealed this all-comprehensive knowledge to Brahmā, who also became the sage-seer. This aboriginal transmission was preceded by the sacred Om, which is the source and synonym of the Vedic lore. Brahmā received and perceived the entire body of knowledge at once (yugapat), and immediately after receiving it but

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once (sakṛd eva). Thus Vishṇu and Brahmā were the first sage-seers of the undistinguished body of knowledge (sarva-vidyā-ṛshayah).

The second stage was marked by the development of the distinction between the apaurusheya and paurusheya divisions. The former was the Veda proper, while the latter was collection of secondary scriptures headed by man-made texts like Pañcha-rātra *(Sātvata-samhitā).* Garuḍa (Suparṇa, Vainateya) was the sage-seer of the apaurusheya division, while Nāgarāja (Śesha, Rudra) of the latter (paurusheya) division. Garuḍa was the sage-seer of the entirety of the Vedic lore (akhila-veda-ṛshi).

The third stage was confined to the apaurusheya portion of the heritage, *viz.* the Veda. As mentioned earlier, the one original Veda (mūla-veda) was accommodated in four books (Ṛgveda, Yajurveda, Sāma-veda and Atharva-veda) by Vyāsa (a form of Vishṇu, the first ṛshi). When this was accomplished, Indra was the sage-seer of Ṛgveda, Sūrya of Yajurveda, Soma of Sāma-veda, Agni (Bhṛgu) for both Atharvan and Āṅgirasa combined (dvandve sati), and Ekarshi for Atharvan alone (ātharvaṇah and āngirasah are themselves ṛshis cf. *Praśnopanishad,* 2,8; *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa,* 11,5,6,7 आथर्वाचङ्गिरसोऽरहरहः स्वाध्यायमधीते ||). The Veda here means the entire collection of mantras, and does not entail the divisions into the intermediate recensions, hymnology and so on.

The fourth stage was characterized by the Vedic corpus classifed not only into the four books, but further recensions, divisions, sūktas and so on.

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The four vedas as books were themselves intermediary Vedas (avāntara-veda); the major and minor (or primary and secondary) recensions were even more intermediary (avāntara-śākhopaśākhā). Each of these recensions had a sage-seer, who was very much human and historical. These sage-seers were no doubt far-removed from the divine sage-seers like Vishṇu, Brahmā, Indra, Sūrya, Agni and Ekarshi; they were human sage-seers but had the presence and prompting of the divine sage-seers within themselves.

One may recall that *Skanda-purāṇa* speaks of three levels of Vedic interpretation (त्रयोऽर्थाः सर्व वेदेषु ।). Even among the sage-seers (ṛshis), there are three levels of 'seeing' (ऋषिर्मन्त्रद्रष्टा ।): the human and historical level, the level of the god that inspires him directly not only to 'see' but to articulate what he 'sees' (like Indra, Agni etc.), and the level of the form of Vishṇu known as Vyāsa who abides in the heart of Brahmā and communicates to him this primal divinity of the Vedic wisdom.

1. सर्वविद्याऋषयः । Vishṇu and Brahmā (Mukhya-Prāṇa)
2. अखिलवेदर्षयः । Garuḍa and Śesha (Rudra)
3. ऋगाद्यवनान्तरभेदऋषयः । Indra, Sūrya, Agni and Ekarshi
4. तदवान्तरशाखोपशाखाऋषयः । Human and historical sage-seers.

It may also be mentioned that according to Ānanda-tīrtha *(Mahābhārata-tātparya-nirṇaya)* the first ṛshi is Vishṇu, and he is the substance (bimba) for Brahmā (Mukhya-prāṇa) who is but his reflection (pratibimba). Garuḍa and Śesha (Rudra) are reflections of Brahmā (Mukhya-prāṇa) who functions

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as substance for them. Indra and Kāma are reflections of Garuḍa and Śesha in turn.

आभासकोऽस्य पवनः । पवनस्य रुद्रः शेषात्मको
गरुड एव च । शक्रकामौ etc. in hierarchical order.

The idea is that Vishṇu (the Supreme spirit) is the real and sole source of the original Vedic wisdom. He operates as an independent substance in all serial reflections (as upaveda, avāntara-veda and sākhā-veda). The substance is what is real and independent, while reflections (ābhāsa or pratibimba) are less real and dependent. The reflection exits and moves only when the substance exists and moves. In effect, there is but one ṛshi for the Veda. As *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* has it :

यस्य निःश्वसितं वेदाः ॥

There is another point to be considered in this context. One may also recall that the human sage-seers are symbolic of so many processes of Prāṇa (vital function, sensory functions) :

प्राणा वै ऋषयः । प्राणा वै देवाः ॥

(*Taittirīya-samhitā* 6.4,1,5)

In *Aitareya-āraṇyaka* (2,2,1), we read that the seven sage-seers are in fact the names of the functions of prāṇa (saptarshayah....prāṇa-rūpāṇi); words ṛshi, kavi, vasu are synonymous with 'marut' and 'viśve-deva'.

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Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa (8,1,2,3) tells us that the ṛshi Jamadagni is in fact the visual organ; it is through the eye that the world is seen

चक्षुर्वै जमदग्निऋषिः यदनेन जगत्पश्यत्यथो मनुते ॥
(चक्षुरित्युपलक्ष्णं इन्द्रियाणां प्राणो मन आदीनाम् ।)

Kaśyapa the sage is a name of prāṇa : कश्यपो वै कूर्मः । (*ibid.*, 7,5,1,5); प्राणो वै कूर्मः । (*ibid.*, 7,5,1,7) :

अनेन प्राणस्य कूर्मः कश्यपश्च संज्ञास्ति। शरीरस्य नाभौ तस्य कूर्माकारावस्थितेः ।

The sense-functions as so many prāṇas are what they are, only because of the presence and dynamism of the chief of them all, mukhya-prāṇa; bereft of mukhya-prāṇa, other prāṇas cannot survive (cf. *Chhāndogya-upanishad,* 1,2,7-9)

अथ ह य एवायं मुख्यः प्राणः...
तेन यदश्नाति यत्पिबति तेनेतरान्प्राणानवति । एतमु
एवान्ततोऽवित्वोत्क्रामति ॥

And the mukhya-prāṇa corresponds with Brahmā the creator, in whose heart is present Vishṇu as Vyāsa. We must therefore take a human sage-seer as representing not only a historical personage, but more importantly as representing the very first sage-seer Brahmā, who abides in his heart. A human sage-seer can 'see' the mantra (becoming a mantra-drashṭā), because

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the first ṛshi is active in his being. Further, this first ṛshi is a ṛshi because Vishṇu is speaking through him. Like the mantrās, the ṛshis also are to be viewed as functioning at three levels : the historical level, the divine level and the supreme level.

- (10) -

In our tradition, the mantra (ṛk) is intimately and invariably associated with the identity of the sage-seer whose words are found expressed in the mantra (yasya vākyam sa ṛshih), and the deity (devatā) towards whom the words are directed. As Yāska says :

यत्काम ऋषिः यस्यां देवतायां आर्थपत्यमिच्छन् स्तुतिं प्रयुंक्ते तद्दैवतः स मन्त्रो भवति ॥

The sage-seer desires to communicate his significant experience, and seeks to eulogize a deity as symbolizing the content of that experience. This is what relates the deity (devatā) with the sage-seer (ṛshi). The deity manifests itself in the heart of the sage-seer. Yāska also notes that the several deities are in fact so many expressions of the great might of the one divinity:

महाभाग्याद्देवतायाः एक आत्मा बहुधा स्तूयते । एकस्यात्मनोऽन्ये देवाः प्रत्यङ्गानि भवन्ति ॥ *(Nirukta,* 7,4)

This one divinity is the self of all the deities, who are but limbs of the one divinity.

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The word 'deva' (also devatā which is synonymous with 'deva' यो देवः सा देवता । from the sūtra देवात्तल् of Pāṇini 5,4,27 इत्यनेन सूत्रेण स्वार्थे तल्विधानात् ।) is derived from the root 'divu', which has as many as ten nuances of meaning : sport, play (krīḍā), desire to conquer (vijigīshā), transaction (vyavahāra), lighting up (dyuti), eulogy (stuti), quivering (mada, glepanām, dīnatā), joy (modah), rest, sleep (svapnah), lustre (kānti) and movement or knowledge (gati, jñānam). These are activities, and the deity is what helps accomplish them (तत्सिद्धिहेतवो देवताः ।). Yāska (7,14), however, explains the word deva as follows :

देवो दानाद्वा दीपनाद्वा द्योतनाद्वा द्युःस्थानो भवतीति वा ॥

The etymological senses of the word 'deva' (or devatā) include the bestowal of gifts, enlightenment, luminosity and residence in heavenly realms.

The deva (or devatā) is therefore the light within the sage-seer (अन्तःप्रकाशा वै ऋषयः ।); the light which illumines the truth which the sage-seer has discovered. The light within the sage-seer gets articulated in the chhandas which is specific to the mantra.

It is with reference to the relationship in which the deity finds itself in the form of address contained in the mantra that the mantra is described as direct (pratyaksha), indirect (paroksha) or self-referential (ādhyātmikya) *(Nirukta,* 7,1) –

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तास्त्रिविधा ऋचः परोक्षकृताः प्रत्यक्षकृताः आध्यात्मिक्यश्च ॥

(तत्र परोक्षकृताः सर्वाभिर्नामविभक्तिभिर्युज्यन्ते प्रथमपुरुषैश्च आख्यातैश्च ।
अथ प्रत्यक्षकृताः मध्यमपुरुषयोगाः 'त्वं' इति च एतेन सर्वनाम्ना ।
अथापि प्रत्यक्षकृताः स्तोतारो भवन्ति । परोक्षकृतानि स्तोतव्यानि ।
अथाध्यात्मिक्य उत्तमपुरुषयोगा 'अहं' इति चैतेन सर्वनाम्ना ॥)

When the deity is addressed as present physically or mentally in front of the sage-seer, it is 'direct'; the deity is referred to as "you", "your", "for you", "by you" and so on (in the second person pronoun). When, however, the deity is suggested to be elsewhere, and the eulogy is made for him now and here albeit in the physical absence, the eulogy contains references to the deity in the third person ("he", "it", "by him", "to him" and so on), and the address is 'indirect'. When the deity envisioned by the sage seer is none other than the sage-seer himself, the form of address to the deity naturally assumes the form of "I", "to me", "by me" and so on (the first person pronoun). The light that shines within absorbs entirely the personality of the individual sage-seer.

The light (deva) that shines within the interior of the sage-seer (ṛshi) is naturally private to him, unique for him and inseparable from him. It is like milk mixed with water, like fire contained in the hot ball of iron (नीरसंवलितक्षीरवत् । आयःपिण्डसमारूढ वह्निवत् ।). The presence of the deity within the sage-seer makes the sage-seer as relevant as the deity for the mantra. The deity is but an aspect or limb (aṅga) of the first of the ṛshis, Brahmā

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(as Prāṇa), and in him is the Supreme Spirit who subsists as pure consciousness (prajñā).

The well-known Pratardana-vidyā *(Kaushītaki-upanishad,* 3,3 belonging to *Ṛgveda)* rests on the doctrine that the Prāṇa is Brahman (प्राणो ब्रह्मेति ह स्माऽऽह पैंग्यः, 2,2), and that all the deities enter into Prāṇa and abide there (ता वा एताः सर्वा देवता वायुमेव प्रविश्य वायौ सृप्ता न मृच्छन्ते)। तस्मादेव उ पुनरुदीरते । इत्यधिदैवतम् ॥ 2, 12). Further, all the deities (*viz.* the sense-functions) recognize that their welfare rests in Prāṇa alone, for Prāṇa is of the nature of pure consciousness (ते देवाः प्राणे निःश्रेयसं विदित्वा प्राणमेव प्रज्ञात्मानं अभिसंभूय..., 2,14). And in this primal Prāṇa, all bodily and sensory functions (devas) merge, and from this again they emerge, like unto the sparks that fly off from the burning fire (यथाऽग्नेर्ज्वलतो विस्फुलिङ्गाः...आत्मनः प्राणाः... प्राणेभ्यो देवाः, देवेभ्यो लोकाः । 3, 3) (cf. also यो वै प्राणः सा प्रज्ञा । या वा प्रज्ञा स प्राणः । सह ह्येतावस्मिन् शरीरे वसतः । सहोत्क्रामतः । 3,4). This Upanishad gives an excellent illustration : like the rim of a wheel settled firmly on the spokes, which in their turn are settled on the nave of the wheel (3,8) :

तद्यथा रथस्यारेषु नेमिरर्पितः । नाभावरा अर्पिताः ।

The spokes being fixed to the nave of the wheel suggests the ओतत्वं प्रविष्टत्वं सर्वगुणाधारत्वं of Omkāra, which represents Brahman, the supreme and sole reality (*viz.* Vishṇu); the spokes are the Vyāhṛtis, and the inner rim is the Gāyatri while the outer rim is the Veda (chhandasr). For it is said *(Mantrārtha-mañjarī,* upodghāta) :

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वेदानामोङ्कारस्य व्याख्यानव्याख्येयभावः । साक्षादेव, व्याहृति गायत्रीपुरुषसूक्तद्वारा वा इति ध्येयम् ॥ (प्रणवार्था व्याहृतयः व्याहृत्यर्था ऋगादयः ॥ ओङ्कारस्तावद् ब्रह्मवाची ॥)

This explains the intimate and necessary association of the sage-seer (ṛshi), the deity (devatā) with the Vedic corpus (chhandas).

Further, the Vedic corpus (upaveda and avāntara-veda) that emerged from the original mass of ṛchah, nigada and sāman (mūla-veda), is distinguished by the arrangement of the mantras in crystallized divisions known as sūkta. A sūkta indicates an independent and self-sufficient group of mantras (in *Ṛgveda-saṃhitā)* pertaining to a common theme. Even a single mantra may constitute a sūkta by itself (as, for instance 1,99,1) or it may consist of a very large number of mantras (as, for instance 9,97 with as many as 58 mantras). If all the mantras in a sūkta are 'seen' by the same sage-seer, the sūkta is called a ṛshi-sūkta; if all the mantras in a sūkta are addressed to one deity, it is called a devatā-sūkta. If different deities are addressed in the same sūkta, it is Vaiśva-devatya-sūkta. And if all the mantras in the sūkta are in the same metrical form, it is chhandas-sūkta.

This classification is significant. The transition from the undistinguished mass (rāśi) that the Veda originally was (mūla-veda) to the elaborately structured 'Vedic corpus that is extant at present (śākhā-veda) was effected largely by the sage-seers (ṛshis), who envisioned deities (devatā) and articulated their visions in words of hidden meaning (chhandas). We have

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now before us the names of these sage-seers and the words that they articulated. But the deities must be visualized by us and the hidden meaning of the words must be decoded. This is 'svādhyāya'.

- (11) -

A word must be said about the Vedic corpus that is available to us, the Śākhā-veda. The Śākhā, as was indicated earlier, does not mean a branch or minor division. It is the entire Vedic text in one recension; it is independent and self-sufficient. Studying it is known as 'svādhyāya' (or rather svādhyāyābhyāsa, for Veda itself is known as svādhyāya). The recension is no doubt due to a sage-seer who took the trouble of not only preserving what tradition had passed on to him, but in systematizing its material (in terms of prapāṭhakas, anuvākas and so on) and handing it over to posterity. The distinctions between the śākhās consists only in readings, recitations and instructions. The basic material is the mantras that were visualized by the ancient seers. No sage-seer who is responsible for the śākhā-veda (Vedic corpus) has created a single mantra. It is therefore that the Veda, whether it is mūla or śākhā, is apaurusheya in the real sense of the term.

Interesting in this context is the observation of *Bṛhaddevatā* (1, 34-40) that the mantras are of many kinds, which apply only to the Śākhā-veda corpus. The mantras are not only praises and prayers, but express desires, doubts, lament, enigmas, agitation, resolutions, requests, prohibitions, plaints,

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admonitions, injunctions, curses, conversations, prattle and so on. All this smacks of human involvement, which introduces the paurusheya element into the Vedic corpus (the contribution of the sage-seers)

मन्त्रा नानाप्रकाराः स्युर्दृष्टा वै मन्त्रदर्शिभिः ।
स्तुत्या चैव विभूत्या च प्रभावाद्देवतात्मनः ॥
स्तुतिः प्रशंसा निन्दा च संशयः परिदेवना ।
स्पृहाशीः कत्थना याश्चा प्रश्नः प्रैषः प्रवल्हिका ॥
नियोगश्चानुयोगश्च श्लाघा विलपितं च यत् ।
आचिख्यासाथ संलापः पवित्राख्यानमेव च ॥
आहनस्या नमस्कारः प्रतिरोधस्तथैव च ।
संकल्पश्च प्रलापश्च प्रतिवाक्यं तथैव च ॥
प्रतिषेधोपदेशौ च प्रमादापह्नवौ च ह ।
उपप्रैषश्च यः प्रोक्तः संज्वरो यश्च विस्मयः ॥
आक्रोशोऽभिष्टवश्चैव क्षेपः शापस्तथैव च ।
उपसर्गो निपातश्च नाम चाख्यातमित्यपि ॥
भूतं भव्यं भविष्यं च पुमान् स्त्री च नपुंसकम् ।
एवं प्रकृतयो मन्त्राः सर्ववेदेषु सर्वशः ॥

Further, the sage-seers were prompted to engage themselves in austerities and thereby envision the mantras, owing to personal unhappiness, fear, misery, glee and sorrow *(Brahmāṇḍa-purāṇa,* 68) :

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मन्त्राः प्रादुर्बभूवुर्हि पूर्वमन्वन्तरोष्विह ।
असन्तोषाद् भयाद् दुःखात्सुखाच्छोकाच्च पञ्चधा ॥

A very human origin of the mantras has been suggested here. But this does not refer to the content or the theme of the mantras, which is truly apaurusheya.

- (12) -

Confining our attention to *Ṛgveda,* Patañjali notes that there were twenty-one śākhas of *Ṛgveda* (ekavimuśati-śākhā-prabhinna-ṛgveda). But *Charaṇa-vyūha* enumerates five śākhās : Śākala (where the eleven Vālakhilya-sūktas are regarded as khila or additional sections), Āśvalāyana (where these sūktas are considered as belonging to the original corpus, and not additional), Bāshkala, Śānkhāyana and Māṇḍukeya. There does not seem to be much of difference between the Āśvalāyana and Śānkhāyana recensions, and between these two on one hand and the Śākala recension on the other. It is therefore that we find in the Purāṇas only three śākhās being named : Śākala, Bāshkala and Māṇḍukeya. The last named has been lost for a long time. We understand that the Bāshkala-recension varies considerably from the Śākala in the matter of arrangement of Sūktas. The Śākala-śākhā (in recitation Śākalya-śaiśirīya) is now universally accepted as the standard version. Kātyāyana's *Anukramaṇī* begins with

अथ ऋग्वेदाम्नाये शाकलके ॥

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and ends with

तदेतत्सूक्तसहस्रं ससप्तदशकं सपादाधिकं
ऋग्वेदे पारायणपाठे शाकल्ये शैशिरीयके ॥
नमः शौनकाय ॥

At present we have two distinct arrangements of the mantras contained in *Ṛgveda-samhitā* of the Śākalya recension. The first, which is helpful in recitation (pārāyaṇa), is the Ashṭaka-vibhāga : it divides the entire text into eight divisions of equal length known as ashṭakas, 64 adhyāyas (chapters) and 2024 vargas (sections). The second is the Maṇḍala-vibhāga : 10 maṇḍalas (of different lengths), 85 anuvākas and 1028 sūktas and more than 10,000 ṛks. Probably, the word maṇḍala (book) is short for 'ṛshi-maṇḍala'. The text consists of 10 maṇḍalas in this order :

Maṇḍala I - The ṛshis Madhuchchhandas-Vaiśvāmitra and others associated with him called 'Śatarchins' (sage-seers with more than a 100 mantras to their credit). This book has 191 sūktas and 2006 mantras.

Mandalas II to VII end - The sage-seers who are recognized by their families (vamśīya-maṇḍala); Gṛtsamada, Viśvāmitra, Vāmadeva, Atri, Bharadvâja, and Vasishṭha in order (अन्ये मध्येषु मध्यमाः). This book has 43 sūktas and 429 mantras.

Maṇḍala VIII - called Pragātha after the sage-seer, whose mantra is the first in the book.

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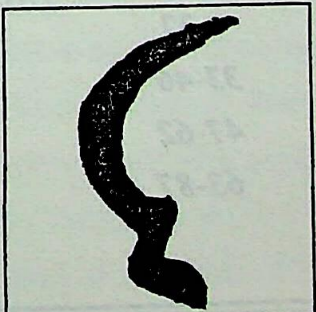
Maṇḍala IX - called Pāvamānya, because of the dominance of the eulogy of the deity Pavamāna.

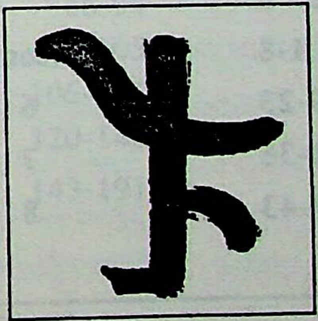
Maṇḍala X - described as 'miscellaneous' (saṅkīrṇa) is characterized by the short and long sūktas (kshudra-sūkta-mahā-sūktas) dealing with a variety of themes, but devoid of arrangements in terms of sage-seers, deities or metrical forms (ṛshi-vibhāga, devatā-vibhāga and chhaṇḍo-vibhāga).

The description of the Vedic corpus known after Śākalya is given as follows *(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā-vivṛti* of Chhalāri)

एवं व्याख्यातव्यऋग्वेदस्य चतुर्विंशतिभेदभिन्नस्य
इयं शाकलशाखा। तदध्यायाः चतुःषष्टि। मण्डलानि च
वै दश। वर्गाणां परिसंख्यातं द्वे सहस्रे षडुत्तरे। सहस्रमेकं
सूक्तानाम्॥

(Note : A sūkta is defined in *Bṛhaddevatā* (1,13) as the most complete statement of a sage-seer सम्पूर्णं ऋषिवाक्यं तु सूक्तमित्यभिधीयते ॥)





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CONCORDANCE OF MAṆḌALA-ASHṬAKA DIVISIONS

(The numbers refer to sūktas in the Maṇḍala division and to adhyāyas in the Ashṭaka division)

Maṇḍala I	*Ashṭaka I*	*Maṇḍala III*	8 (contd)
1-19	1	1-6	*Ashṭaka III*
20-32	2	7-29	1
33-46	3	30-39	2
47-61	4	40-55	3
62-80	5	56-62	4
81-94	6	*Maṇḍala IV*	
95-112	7	1-4	4 (contd)
113-121	8	5-18	5
	Ashṭaka II	19-32	6
122-136	1	33-50	7
137-157	2	51-58	4
158-165	3		
166-183	4	*Maṇḍala V*	
184-191	5	*1-8*	8 (contd)
Maṇḍala II			*Ashṭaka IV*
1-8	5 (contd)	9-32	*1*
9-23	6	*33-46*	*2*
24-36	7	*47-62*	*3*
37-43	8	*63-87*	*4*

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CONCORDANCE OF MAṆḌALA-ASHṬAKA DIVISIONS

(Contd.)

Maṇḍala VII	
1-1	1 (contd)
2-19	2
20-35	3
36-59	4
60-80	5
81-100	6
101-104	7
Maṇḍala VIII	
1-4	7 (contd)
5-11	8
	Ashṭaka VI
12-20	1
21-31	2
32-45	3
46-67	4
68-81	5
82-97	6
98-103	7

Maṇḍala IX	
1-12	7 (contd)
13-43	8
	Ashṭaka VII
44-64	1
65-75	2
76-90	3
91-100	4
101-114	5
Maṇḍala X	
1-5	5 (contd)
6-18	6
19-32	7
33-45	8
	Ashṭaka VIII
46-61	1
62-71	2
72-85	3
86-94	4
95-105	5
106-119	6
120-142	7
143-191	8

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It is universally recognized that by Veda is principally meant Ṛgveda. There is, however, a contention that Veda is mainly a ritualistic text and is therefore secondary to Yajurveda which is entirely ritualistic in intent and orientation. Sāyaṇa was the spokesman of this view. He raises this issue in his *Ṛgbhāshya-bhūmikā,* and explains the two viewpoints lacidly. Chhalāri Narasimhāchārya refers to this argument and argues that Ṛgveda is the basic text *(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā-vivṛti,* Introduction)

न च वाच्यं कर्मणा विना शुद्ध्यचभावात् यजुर्वेदस्यैव कर्मज्ञापकस्य प्राधान्यात् मुख्यतो व्याख्येयत्वं न ऋग्वेदस्येति। कर्मणा ज्ञानमातनोतीति श्रुतेः भगवज्ज्ञानार्थत्वात् तस्य च गुणोत्कर्षज्ञानरूपत्वात् तस्यैव भगवत्प्रसादद्वारा मोक्षार्थत्वस्य न तादृशी प्रीतिः ईड्यस्य इति श्रुतिसिद्धत्वात् गुणोत्कर्षज्ञानापेक्षया कर्मणामप्राधान्यात् कर्मप्रतिपादकयजुर्वेदस्य गुणप्रतिपादक ऋग्वेदाद् अमुख्यत्वात्। अत एव पुरुषसूक्ते ऋचः सामानि जज्ञिरे इति ऋचां सर्ववेदेभ्यः प्रथमं प्रादुर्भाव उक्तः। एतेन मन्दानामपि सुबोधार्थक ऋग्वेदात् दुर्बाधयजुर्वेदस्यैव मुख्यतो। व्याख्येयत्वमपि निरस्तम्।ऋचां स्फुटं गुणप्रतिपादकत्वेन भगवत् तुष्ट्यर्थत्वेन व्याख्येयत्वस्य उक्तत्वात्॥

The reference in this important passage is to Sāyaṇa's apologetic view that he had to prepare his commentary on Yajurveda first, for it was his own śākhā and that it had a primacy over Ṛgveda by its concern with rituals. His commentary on *Ṛgveda* was guided by the ritualistic orientation of Yajurveda (ऋग्भिः स्तुवन्ति यजुभिर्यजन्ति।), and he attempts to justify this stand

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in his Prologue (bhāshya-bhūmikā). Yajurveda is more important for him than *Ṛgveda*, because Yajurveda directly and explicitly prescribes rituals, whereas *Ṛgveda* does not. Sāyaṇa further accepts the ritualistic emphasis in the definition of the word Veda. He regards the ritualistic passages of the brāhmaṇa section as equal in importance with the mantras. His words are

मन्त्रब्राह्मणात्मकशब्दराशिर्वेदः सर्वभाष्यकाराः ॥

and मन्त्रब्राह्मणमित्याहुर्वेदशब्दं महर्षयः ॥

His authorities are Bodhāyana who says मन्त्रब्राह्मणमित्याहुः ।; Āpastamba, who says मन्त्रब्राह्मणयोर्वेदनामधेयम् । following Kātyāyana; Śabarasvāmin who says मन्त्रश्च ब्राह्मणं च वेदः । and Shaḍguru-śishya who says विनियोक्तव्यरूपोऽयं स मन्त्र इति कथ्यते, विधिस्तुतिकरं शेषं ब्राह्मणं ते कथयन्ति ॥

Sāyaṇa's introduction to his *Sāmaveda-bhāshya* records the uncertainty that there was in his days about what constituted the Veda and what the brāhmaṇa

ननु मन्त्रवेदयोः को विशेष इति चेदुच्यते । मन्त्रब्राह्मणसमष्टिर्वेदः । तथा
चापस्तम्बं स्मरति-मन्त्रब्राह्मणयोर्वेदनामधेयमिति । तत्र मन्त्रस्वरूपनिर्णयं
द्वितीयाध्यायस्य प्रथमपादे सप्तमाधिकारणे न्यायविस्तरकार इत्थं उदाजहार –

अहे बुध्निय मन्त्रं मे इति मन्त्रस्य लक्षणम् ।
नास्त्यस्ति वाऽस्य नास्त्येदव्याप्त्यादेरवारणात् ।

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याज्ञिकानां समाख्यानं लक्षणं दोषवर्जितम् ।
तेऽनुष्ठानस्मारकादौ मन्त्रशब्दं प्रयुज्यते ॥
(जैमिनीयन्यायमालाविस्तरे २॥१॥७॥)

तस्मादभियुक्तानां मन्त्रोऽयमिति समाख्यानं लक्षणम् ॥ ब्राह्मणस्वरूपमपि तत्रैव अष्टमाधिकरणे इत्थं निर्णीतम् –

नास्त्येतद् ब्राह्मणेत्यत्र लक्षणं विद्यतेऽथवा ।
नास्तीयन्तो वेदभाग इति कॢप्तेरभावतः ॥
मन्त्रश्च ब्राह्मणं चेति द्वौ भागौ तेन मन्त्रतः ।
अन्यद् ब्राह्मणमित्येतद् भवेद् ब्राह्मणलक्षणम् ॥
(तत्रैव २॥१॥८॥)

The mantra is whatever the ritualist experts (abhiyuktas) decide it is; and the brāhmaṇa is whatever is not the mantra ! Other than this, there can be no way of ascertaining what the mantra is and what the brāhmaṇa is. It is strange that this anomalous position is acceptable to Sāyaṇa. Despite this academic differentiation of mantra from brāhmaṇa, Sāyaṇa startles us by insisting that Veda is practically a totality (samashṭi) of mantras and brāhmaṇas, thus putting them on an equal footing, quite contrarily to Yāska's reckoning.

This approach is entirely erroneous. To equate mantra with brāhmaṇa in status and significance is a gross misrepresentation of tradition. It is unfortunate that this misrepresentation has survived since the middle ages

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till our own day. Traditionally, the brāhmaṇa passages are meant to interpret and explain the ritualistic significance of some of the mantras (veda-vyākhyānāt); and they are clearly compositions of intelligent human beings (manushya-buddhi-rachitatvāchcha). We find in the *Taittirīya-āraṇyaka* (2,9) that brāhmaṇas are included among different human attempts to explain the apaurusheya-veda :

यद् ब्राह्मणानीतिहासान् पुराणानि कल्पा गाथा नाराशंसीः ॥

The brāhmaṇa texts are like historical narratives (itihāsa), accounts of hoary past but of contemporary significance (purāṇa), exegetical illustrations of the force of the mantras like in the dialogue betwixt Yājñavalkya and Janaka (kalpa) and praises of eminent personages (nārāśamsī). The very nature of the brāhmaṇa passages is markedly different from the spirit of the mantras. The traditional division of brāhmaṇa into vidhi, arthavāda and anuvāda makes this obvious.

The 'vidhi' consists of prescriptions (विधिर्विधायकः । *Nyāya-sūtra* 2,1,62); they are impelling sentences (preraka-vākya) :

यद्वाक्यं विधायकं चोदकं स विधिः । (Vātsyāyana)

There are sentences which enjoin an activity (niyoga, like देवदत्तो ग्रामं गच्छेत् ।); there are also sentences which only permit (anujñā, like अग्निहोत्रं जुहुयात्स्वर्गकामः ।).

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The 'arthavāda' sentences explain, illustrate and eulogize what the 'vidhi' prescribes. They resort to mythical legends, historical anecdotes and reasoned explanations; they also speak of the rewards (phalavāda), in order to ensure the development of faith

स्तुतिर्निन्दा परकृतिः पुराकल्प इति। (*Nyāya-sūtra* 2,1,63)
(फलवादलक्षणा या प्रशंसा सा स्तुतिः। निन्दा अनिष्टफलवादः।
संश्रयार्थं स्तूयमानं श्रद्धधीतेति प्रवर्तिका च॥ (Vātsyāyana)

The 'anuvāda' portions follow closely the prescriptive 'vidhi' passages

विध्यनुवचनम्। विधिविहितस्य अनुवचनम्। (*Nyāya-sūtra* 2,1,63)
(फलवादलक्षणा या प्रशंसा सा स्तुतिः। निन्दा अनिष्टफलवादः।
संश्रयार्थं स्तूयमानं श्रद्धधीतेति प्रवर्तिका च॥ (Vātsyāyana)

The 'anuvāda' portions follow closely the prescriptive 'vidhi' passages

विध्यनुवचनम्। विधिविहितस्य अनुवचनम्। (*Nyāya-sūtra* 2,1,24)
विहितमनुवचनं च॥ (Vātsyāyana)

First, the 'vidhi' prescriptions, then follow the reflections on the prescriptions (anu-smaraṇa). If the prescription is to learn, the words of the prescription are considered first (पूर्वः शब्दानुवादः।), and then the implications thereof (like, by learning, one becomes wise) are spelt out (अपरो अर्थानुवादः।)

One can readily see that all this is altogether alien to the spirit of the mantras. If such be the nature of the brāhmaṇa, it is clearly antithetical to

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the mantra which is mental projection of a pure and sublime order of something real but hidden (मन्त्रा मननात् । *Nirukta* 7,3,12; मन् ज्ञाने *Dhātu-pāṭha* 4,65; मन्यन्ते ज्ञायन्ते सत्याः पदार्थाः यस्मिन् ।). The idea of Veda cannot possibly envisage a fusion of mantra (which is knowledge-oriented) and brāhmaṇa (which is ritual oriented).

It is true that in the extant Vedic corpus, each of the Vedas (with the exception of Atharvāṅgirasa) has brāhmaṇa-texts as appendages. It is also true that many of the Vedic recensions (śākhā) do not have brāhmaṇas to go with the mantras. But the traditional study of Veda (svādhyāya, vedābhyāsa) is confined to the collection of mantras, and does not include brāhmaṇa-texts. The definition of Veda which the ritualists accept (मन्त्रब्राह्मणयोर्वेदनामधेयम् ।) becomes irrelevant, when we consider that the Vedic corpus does not stop with the brāhmaṇas. There are 'āraṇyaka-texts' after the 'brāhmaṇas', and the āraṇyakas are followed by the 'upanishads'. The upanishads are regarded as 'Śruti' (*viz.* Veda) by all the Āchāryas; and the name vedāntas for them (employed by Śamkara as well as Rāmānuja) indicates their being the final ascertainment of the Vedic wisdom. Either the word Veda must mean all the four divisions (samhitā, brāhmaṇa, āraṇyaka and upanishad) or must strictly refer to the Samhitā (mantra) alone. We have an expression frequently used in tradition, 'vedopanishadah' (veda and the upanishads), which supports the latter alternative; the Veda here does not include the brāhmaṇas, but refers only to the mantra collection.

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Even a committed adherent of the Brāhmaṇa approach like Shaḍguru-śishya (the glossator of Kātyāyana's *Sarvānukramaṇī)* makes a distinction between Veda and Brāhmaṇa : the former is chhandas while the later is not. In fact, he says, the Veda is so because of chhandas (छन्दो गायत्र्यादि । तद्योगाद्धि वेदः ।). And not all of Veda is associated with the Brāhmaṇa, according to him. The portion of the Veda that is employed during the performance of a ritual act is relevant to the Brāhmaṇas. His words are :

मन्त्राणां विहितानां पदार्थानामनुष्ठानकाले स्मारकतया मननसाधनभूतानां
विनियोज्यवेदभागानां सम्बन्धिनां ब्राह्मणादीनां ज्ञाता (विद् यथावज्ज्ञाता) ।

The words of the mantras are something to be understood; the Brāhmaṇas only prescribe the performance of the ritual act. The two have different orienta-tions and purposes *(Vedārtha-dīpikā).* The definition of *Brāhmaṇa* given by Vijayapāla in his Upodghāta to Katyāyanīya *Ṛksarvānukramaṇī* is interesting :

बहुदिवससाध्य सोमयागेषु ब्रह्मोद्यानि समायोज्यन्ते स्म यत्र
ब्रह्मर्त्विक्प्रमुखा अनूचानाः कर्मविशेषं अधिकृत्य प्रवचनानि प्रास्ताविषुः । तान्येव
प्रवचनानि ब्रह्मकर्तृकत्वाद् ब्राह्मणानीति नामधेयेन प्रसिद्धानि बभूवुः ॥

In major sacrificial sessions (like Soma-yāga), the master of ceremonies and other leaders of the ritual gave discourses; and these discourses mainly given by the master of ceremonies (called Brahma) became celebrated by the name of brāhmaṇas (because their authors were the priests called Brahmā). It is obvious that these tracts were not regarded as apaurusheya.

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When we read in *Mahābhārata* (Śānti, 238,14) that in the beginning of the Tretā-age there were "only" Vedas, or that there were no rules (vidhi) for the rituals (sacrifices) in the Kṛtā age (*ibid.,* 232,32), it is obvious that the Brāhmaṇa texts were not there along with the Vedas, and that they were but later appendages. Even rituals (yajñas) were there, but no texts to guide them :

त्रेतादौ कैवला वेदा यज्ञा वर्णाश्रमास्तथा ॥
त्रेतायुगे विधिस्त्वेष यज्ञानां न कृते युगे ॥

It is also to be noted that *Āśvalāyana-gṛhya-sūtra* (belonging to Ṛgveda, and following the brāhmaṇa of this Veda, viz. *Aitareya-brāhmaṇa)* distinguishes between the sage-seers (ṛshis) who were seers of the Ṛgvedic mantras and the preceptors (āchāryas) who were 'authors' of the brāhmaṇas. There are names also of these historical preceptors : Kahola, Kaushītaki, Paiṅgya, Śānkhāyana, Suyajña, Aitareya, Mahaitareya, Śākala, Bāshkala, Śaunaka, Audavāhi, Saujāmi and so on. It is obvious that the brāhmaṇas cannot be regarded as apaurusheya like the mantras; they can only be ardha-paurusheya, if not paurusheya. It may not also be correct to regard the brāhmaṇa-texts as interpretations of the mantras (veda-vyākhyāna).

The brāhmaṇas are evidently texts which are wholly ritualistic in character (karma-kāṇḍa), and they seek to provide guidance for the performance of major and minor sacrifices. They are designed only to help the priests (ṛtvijas) and minor sacrifices. They are designed only to help the priests (ṛtvijas) in

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their professional work. *Aitareya-brāhmaṇa,* for instance, occurs as an appendage to *Ṛgveda-samhitā,* but the forty chapters of this work are in no way related to the ideology, philosophy or spirit of the Ṛgvedic hymns. Only some mantras from this Veda are extracted for being recited by the hotṛ-priests during sacrificial sessions like Soma-yāga. There is no attempt to explain or interpret any of the significant concepts contained in the Samhitā. The entire text is concerned only with practical instructions needed for the effective performance of rituals.

This, however, is not the case with *Aitareya-upanishad,* which follows *Aitareya-brāhmaṇa.* The Upanishad takes the spiritual and philosophical tendency of the *Ṛgveda-samhitā* to its natural climax (3,3 एष ब्रह्मा । एष इन्द्रः । एष प्रजापतिः । एते सर्वे देवाः ।...प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठा । प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म ॥). It explains the ideas contained in several mantras of *Ṛgveda* (e.g. 9,11,3; 10,82,1; 10,90,8; 10,90,13-14; 10,108,1; 10,113,8; 10,165,1 etc.) And the interpretation of the Ṛgvedic Indra in terms of 'idamdra' conspicuously relates it with the hidden meanings in the Samhitā (3,1,14)

तस्मादिन्द्रो नाम । इदन्द्रो ह वै नाम । तमिदन्द्रं सन्तं इन्द्र इत्याचक्षते
परोक्षेण । परोक्षप्रिया इव हि देवाः, परोक्षप्रिया इव हि देवाः ॥

And the upanishad summarizes excellently, if also cryptically, the main thrust of the *Ṛgveda-samhitā* (3,1)

कोऽयमात्मेति वयमुपास्महे । कतरः स आत्मा ॥

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- (14) -

The revert to the passage from *Ṛgbhāshya-ṭikā-vivṛti,* quoted above, the author points out that the purpose of Ṛgveda is to generate knowledge that will lead to liberation from the fetters of transactional existence (moksha); and that the final purpose of the performance of rituals (prescribed in Yajurveda) is also the production of knowledge (karmaṇā jñānam ātanoti). The knowledge envisaged in the mantras of the Ṛgveda is knowledge of the real nature of the Supreme Reality, which knowledge secures the grace (prasāda) of the Supreme Reality, which in turn will accomplish liberation. Rituals are not ends in themselves, nor are they sine qua non for liberation (karmaṇām aprādhānyāt). The Yajurvedic corpus, elaborating on the rituals, is in fact difficult for the common man to understand (durbodha-yajurvedasya), and often-times altogether irrelevant for the daily life of the common folk. Ṛgvedic mantras on the other hand, are not only easy to understand but can guide all of us in our daily life by focussing our attention on the Godhead (the Supreme Reality). This is the relative merit of Ṛgveda, and its claim to be studied first.

Sāyaṇa is known for the division he makes between the ritual import of the Veda (karma-kāṇḍa) leading to the heaven (svarga) and the knowledge-part of the Veda (jñāna-kāṇḍa) leading to emancipation (moksha). How ancient this division is is hard to tell. It is certain that Yāska did not subscribe to this distinction. Sāyaṇa not only makes much of this division, but insists

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that the ritualistic orientation is fundamental to Veda. Read, for instance, what he says in his introductory essay (bhūmikā) to his commentary on *Kāṇva-samhitā* included in Śukla-yajurveda :

> तस्मिंश्च वेदे द्वौ काण्डौ कर्मकाणडो ब्रह्मकाण्डश्च ।...तस्मिंश्च वेदे कर्मकाण्डः प्रथममाम्नातः । यद्यपि ब्रह्मणोऽभ्यर्हितत्वाद् ब्रह्मकाण्डस्येव प्राथम्यमुचितं तथापि कर्मभिः साध्यां चित्तशुद्धिमन्तरेण पुरुषस्य ब्रह्मकाण्डे अधिकाराभावात् अधिकारहेतुकर्मप्रतिपादकः काण्डः प्रथमं समाम्नातः ॥...कर्मणि नित्यं नैमित्तिकं काम्यं निषिद्धं चेति चतुर्विधानि । परमतात्पर्यं तु वेदस्य नित्यकर्मस्येव । तस्मात्कर्मकाण्डगतयोः संहिताशतपथ-ग्रन्थयोः प्राधान्येन नित्यकर्माणि आम्नातानि ॥

Sāyaṇa repeats this division of the Veda into two parts, while commenting on RV 10,71,5 (उत त्वं सख्ये ।). Yāska also comments on this stanza *(Nirukta* 4,11), which describes the one that learns to recite the Veda without understanding its meaning as 'devoid of flower and fruit' (अफलामपुष्पाम् ।). According to Yāska, flower and fruit refers to the ritual and the deity, or the deity of the ritual and the ātman who is the spirit of the deity.

यज्ञदैवते पुष्पफले, देवताध्यात्मे वा ॥

The knowledge concerning the ritual (yājñavishayakam jñānam) is the flower (pushpa-rūpa), while the knowledge concerning the deity (devatārtha-jñāna) is fruit (phala-rūpa). Alternately (pakshāntare), the flower is the knowledge

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of the deity, and the supreme spirit (paramātmā) is the fruit. Sāyaṇa, however, speaks of the dharma dealt with in the karma-kāṇḍa (ritual) as the flower, and the Brahman treated in the jñāna-kāṇḍa (philosophy) as the fruit :

पूर्वकाण्डोक्तधर्मस्य ज्ञानं पुष्पम् । उत्तरकाण्डोक्तब्रह्मणो ज्ञानं फलम् ।

This distinction is not be found in Yāska, and is not justified in the context of the Ṛgvedic passage. For Sāyaṇa, ritual is the most important detail in the Vedic corpus.

Even if ritual (yajña) is regarded as the dominant note in Vedic tradition as the Mīmāmsakas and some Vedāntins suppose, the ritual need not be only physical, material or external (bāhya); more significantly it can be internal (antaryajña) or mental (mānasa). That ritual means what is done with the hands and with materials of several types (like kindling the holy fire, preparing the consecrated soma, offerings and oblations made, reciting mantras and so on) is the conventional view held by common people (ajña-rūḍhi). The Vedic reference to yajña, at any rate in Ṛgveda, does not subscribe to this view. The ritual has a symbolic significance. The attitude and the orientation are most important in any ritual, more so in a ritual that is mental and esoteric. Understanding the significance of the ritual, especially when it is a means for liberation characterizes the ritual mentioned in the Ṛgvedic passages. The sage-seers had their own enlightened convention (vidvad-rūḍhi).

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It is in this context that one is advised not to take the words of the mantras in their conventional sense, but inquire methodically into the possible but hidden meaning that may be more relevant.

न आपातप्रतीत एव श्रुत्यर्थः ।...किन्तु मीमांसित एव ॥

as Rāghavendra-tīrtha says. The traditional method of inquiry into the real meaning of the mantras was indicated by Ānanda-tīrtha. This ascertainment of the essential import was necessary, for otherwise the Vedas would cease to be supremely authentic (parā-vidyā), and become merely a common branch of learning (aparā vidyā).

ऋगाद्या अपरा विद्या यदा विष्णोर्न वाचकाः ।
ता एव परमा विद्या यदा विष्णोस्तु वाचकाः ॥

If rituals are what the Veda is supposed to teach, then the Veda is not worth its while. The Veda is sacred, holy and ultimate because it can become the effective means of the ultimate object of human existence, *viz.* moksha. And this is secured by the correct understanding (jñāna) of the nature of the Supreme Reality (Vishṇu). The Vedic lore without causing this understanding of Godhead is little more than mere books or aparā-vidyā. The method of inquiry should be directed towards making the Veda parā-vidyā. And the standard procedure for the ascertainment of the essential import (tātparya-nirṇaya) has these seven dimensions :

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उपक्रमोपसंहारावभ्यासोऽपूर्वताफलम् ।
अर्थवादोऽपपत्ती च लिङ्गं तात्पर्यनिर्णये ॥

(Bṛhat-samhitā)

How a text begins (upakrama), how it ends (upasamhāra), what is repeated often (abhyāsa), what is novel (apūrvatā), what is of the nature of an actual accomplishment (phalam), how the explanations are given (arthavāda, taking the forms of eulogy, denunciation, illustration by drawing attention to the conduct of others and the ancient lore; stuti, nindā, parakṛti and purākalpa), and providing evidences, arguments carrying conviction (upapatti).

Besides these, we are also asked to consider five other details of inquiry :

श्रुतिर्लिङ्गं समाख्या च वाक्यं प्रकरणं तथा ।
पूर्वं पूर्वं बलीयः स्यात् एवमागमनिर्णयः ॥

Support from scriptures or authoritative works (śruti), unique and outstanding characteristics (liṅga), concordance, corresponding statements or explanations (samākhyā), statements in the nature of eliminating doubts or answering objections (vākyam) and the contextual relevance (prakaraṇam).

The need to adopt this method of inquiry is felt because what appears at first glance appears to be at great variance with what is the import of all scriptures. The need is to reconcile the scriptural text (śruti) with ones reasoning in depth (yukti). While employing this method, we are told that

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not all the details are equally important. Śruti for instance is most important, and prakaraṇa or contextual relevance is the least. In between are details of reasoning. Śruti (scriptural text) is most important because it is apaurusheya (impersonal), āpta-vākya (counsel of one who is trustworthy) and hita-tama (most interested in our welfare). The emphasis is on the correct understanding of the main thrust of the scriptural passage, for there is in it a natural proclivity to use words which conceal the meaning परोक्षप्रिया इव हि देवाः, प्रत्यक्षद्विषः ।)

This, however, does not suggest that the apparent or conventional meaning of a mantra is to be totally rejected. It has its value and function. And the words employed have their own etymological validity, grammatical significance, relevance in the lexicon, and transactional utility.

नेषु तेषु पदार्थेषु रूढिरङ्गीकृता यतः ।
प्रयोजनबहुत्वेन तस्य तस्याविरोधतः ।
उपदेशादि सामर्थ्याद्विष्णौ शक्तिश्च गृह्यते ॥

(Anuvyākhyāna, 1,4,11)

When, for instance, the conventional meaning of a mantra indicates a ritual or sacrifice (yajña), it must be accepted as such; when Agni is referred to, a deity with a personality of his own must be recognized. If this is the main thrust at one level of understanding (mukhya-vṛtti), one must not stop there, but proceed further, on the basis of the method of inquiry, and ascertain that the ritual referred to is in reality internal sacrifice (āntara-yajña), and

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not the external ritual that the conventional approach supposes (bāhya-yajña), and that it is not the deity Agni that is invited or eulogized but the supremely real Vishṇu who abides in Agni. This is a higher level of understanding (parama-mukhya-vṛtti).

Another interesting observation merits mention here. Ānanda-tīrtha recalls a traditional classification of scriptural language into three varieties in his *Mahābhārata-tātparya-nirṇaya* (2,125-128 and 22,397-400)

भाषास्तु त्रिविधास्तत्र मया वै सम्प्रदर्शिताः ।
उक्तो यो महिमा विष्णोः स तूक्तो हि समाधिना ॥
समाधिभाषयोक्तं यत्तत्सर्वं ग्राह्यमेव हि ।
अविरुद्धं समाधेस्तु दर्शनोक्तं च गृह्यते ॥
आद्यन्तयोर्विरुद्धं यद्दर्शनं तदुदाहृतम् ।
दर्शनान्तरसिद्धं च गुह्यभाषान्यथा भवेत् ।
तस्माद्विष्णोर्हि महिमा भारतोक्तो यथार्थतः ॥

The three varieties of language employed in scriptural texts like the Veda (and the *Mahābhārata,* according to Ānanda-tīrtha) are : (1) samādhi, (2) darśana and (3) guhya. The first variety of language follows immediately profound meditative absorption; the words come out of intense concentration. It is also most lucid. Vādirāja-tirtha explains :

समाहितमनसा चित्तैकाग्र्यतया कथितत्वात् स्पष्टमुक्तम् ॥

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It is born out of direct experience of reality, and therefore it is to be accepted as such, all of it. When the scriptures tell us clearly about Brahman (Vishṇu) being the supreme and sole reality, they are spontaneous utterances of sage-seers who are immersed in tapas. The Veda is thus altogether trust-worthy. Its language is quite unlike common transactional language. It is in this sense that the Veda is apaurusheya.

The second variety (darśana) is deliberate and careful utterance of what has been known by observation, apprehension and examination. It is born out of intellectual understanding and judgement. Being very much like the common transactional language, it is liable to be misconstrued. When, for instance, what is observed now is contrary to what was said earlier or what would be said later, what is said now must be in conformity with the position indicated by the earlier and later statements. Otherwise, the present utterance must be rejected. Even when there is agreement with the earlier, present and later statements, it may be a view, an opinion albeit based on observation. It needs to be confirmed by reasoning, by examination, and by inquiry. If, however, it follows closely the samādhi-bhāshā then it must be accepted.

> आदावुक्तकृष्णमहिमाख्यप्रमेयस्य अन्ते वक्ष्यमाणकृष्णोत्कर्षाख्यप्रमेयस्य
> च विरुद्धं दर्शनान्तरसद्धिं वैष्णवदर्शनविरुद्धं पाशुपतादिदर्शनान्तरसिद्धं यत् ,
> मध्ये कश्चिदज्ञजनमोहनाय कथ्यते तद्दर्शनं दर्शनभाषयोक्तमित्यर्थः ॥

The above explanation of Vādirājā-tīrtha brings out the peculiarity of darśana-bhāshā. There is not always consistency in what is being said now, what

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was said earlier and what would be said later. This may be due to interspersing with one's observation the views or doctrines of other systems of thought. Or it may result from an attempt to confound the common people during the course of the statement.

The third variety (guhya) is in nature different from the first two varieties. The main feature here is that what is said is not what is meant. There is a hidden meaning, concealed intent, in the words that are employed. What is apparent is not what is real. It is mystic language, pointing towards the mysterious

गूढार्थकपदघटनयोच्यत इति यावत्सा गुह्यभाषेत्यर्थः ॥

One should go beyond the conventional level of understanding, and dive deeper in order to get at the real or intended meaning.

Apart from the contextual significance of this classification in Mahābhārata indicated by Ānanda-tīrtha, its relevance to our discussion here is also there. The Vedic language makes use of all three vatrieties. The sage-seers of the mantras are in a state of meditative absorption (samādhi), when the words come out from them. All the devatā-sūktas illustrate the first variety. But there are also mantras which assume transactional forms : the dāna-stutis, samvāda-sūktas, vivāha-sūktas, aksha-sūkta, ābhichārika-sūktas and Aurdhva-dehika-sūktas are examples of the variety known as darśana-bhāshā. The main character of the Veda, however is that it is chhandas : it conceals

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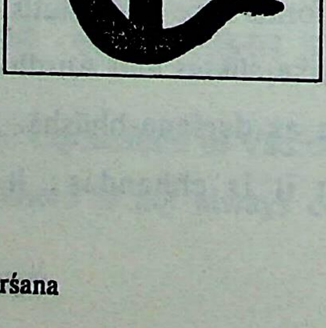
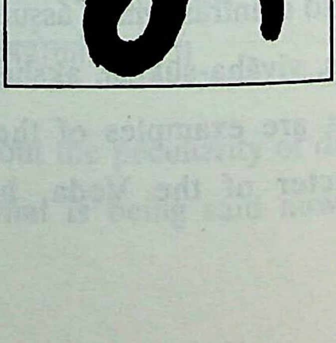
(chhādanāt). It is repeatedly claimed that the devas and the ṛshis are known for their 'paroksha-priyatva' (love of indirect speech). The Veda is therefore marked by 'nīṇya' (rahasya), the mysterious. It is preeminently 'guhya-bhāshā'.

There is need therefore to decode, to go beyond the apparent and the superficial, and dive deeper. The method of inquiry (mīmāmsā) suggested by Ānanda-tīrtha acquires especial significance in this context. An insight into this significance is provided by the introductory section (upodghāta) of Rāghavendra-tīrtha's *Mantrārtha-mañjarī,* which is being reproduced here.

* * * *





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॥ श्रीराघवेन्द्रतीर्थयतिविरचिता मन्त्रार्थमञ्जरी उपोद्घातः ॥

अशेषगुणसम्पूर्णं सर्वदोषविवर्जितम् ।
अनन्ताम्नायसंवेद्यं वन्देऽहं कमलापतिम् ॥१॥
प्राणम्य श्रीमदानन्दतीर्थादि गुरुशेखरान् ।
संग्रहीष्यामि ऋग्भाष्यप्रोक्तानर्थानृचां स्फुटम् ॥२॥

१. ऋक्शाखागतैकोत्तरसहस्रसूक्तमध्ये कानिचिच्चत्वारिंशत्सूक्तानि भगवत्पादैः अग्न्यादिदेवतापरत्वेन (१), तदन्तर्गतविष्णुपरत्वेन (२), अध्यात्मपरत्वेन (३), चेत्येवं त्र्यर्थपरतया व्याख्यातानि ।

२. तत्रैके चोदयन्ति ।

'तत्तत्कर्मणि विनियुक्तानां मन्त्राणां अर्थविवक्षावत्त्वस्य पूर्वतन्त्रीयाध्यायद्वितीयपादे ''तदर्थशास्त्रात्'' इति मन्त्राधिकरणे सिद्धत्वेन, मीमांसकाभिमतशब्द सामर्थ्यरूपलिंगेन तत्तत्प्रकरणेन च तत्तद्देवतार्थकत्वं एव उचितम् । न तु विष्ण्वर्थकत्वमपि ।

(अ) मानाभावात् ।

(आ) अनेकार्थत्वस्य अन्याय्यत्वाच्च ।

(इ) सर्वसूक्तानां विष्णुसूक्तत्वापत्त्या आग्नेयादिसूक्तव्यवस्थानुपपत्तेश्च ।

(ई) अनेकार्थत्वे तन्निबन्धनवाक्यभेदापत्तेश्च । 'अर्थैकत्वादेकं वाक्यम् । (२,१,४६) इति जैमिन्युक्त्या अर्थैकत्वनिमित्तकत्वादेकवाक्यतायाः । इत्यादि ॥

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३. तत्र ब्रूमः ।

'ओंकारस्तावद् ब्रह्मवाची', 'ओमिति ब्रह्म' (तै. ३०१) इत्यादि श्रुतेः, 'ओं तत्सदिति निर्देशो ब्रह्मणस्त्रिविधः स्मृतः ।' (गी. १७,२३) इत्यादि स्मृतेः, ब्रह्म ओंकारवाच्यम् । गुणपूर्तिरूपोंकारप्रवृत्तिनिमित्तत्वात् । यत् यच्छब्दप्रवृत्तिनिमित्तवत् तत् तच्छब्दवाच्यम् । यथा घटादि पदवाच्यं घटादिकमिति वा । ओंकारो ब्रह्मवाची । तन्निष्ठधर्मप्रवृत्तिहेतुत्वात् । सामान्यव्याप्त्या संमतवदिति वा । इत्यनुमानाच्च । ओतत्ववाची ह्योंकारः इत्यनुव्याख्यानसुधयोः ओंकारस्य गुणपूर्तिनिमित्तकत्वं, ब्रह्म च गुणपूर्णमिति, तदेव विष्णुः इति च व्यक्तम् ॥

४. वेदश्च ओंकाररस्य व्याख्यानम् । 'ओंकारेण सर्वा वाक् संतृण्णा' इति छन्दोगश्रुतेः (२,१३) । तथा च विष्णुः सर्ववेदप्रतिपाद्यः तद्व्याख्येयोंकारार्थत्वात् । यो यद् व्याख्येयार्थः स तद्व्याख्यान प्रतिपाद्यः । यथा संमत इति वा ॥

वेदा विष्णुपुराः । विष्णुरोंकारव्याख्यानत्वात् । यो यत्परशब्दव्याख्यानं स तत्परः । यथा संमत इति वा । इत्यनुमानेन सर्ववेदानां विष्ण्वर्थत्व सिद्धेः मानाभावात् इत्ययुक्तम् । वेदानां ओंकारस्य व्याख्यानव्याख्येयभावश्च साक्षादेव वा, अनुव्याख्यान ऋग्भाष्ययोरुक्तदिशा व्याहृति-गायत्री-पुरषसूक्तद्वारा वा, इति ध्येयम् ॥

५. किञ्च,

'अदुःखमितरत् सर्वं जीवा एव तु दुःखिनः ।
तेषां दुःखप्रहाणाय श्रुतिरेषा प्रवर्तते ॥'

इति श्रुतेः (परमश्रुत्या) जीवानां दुःखप्रहाणरूपबन्धनिवृत्तिलक्षणमोक्षार्थं प्रवृत्तत्वात् । सत्यबन्धनिवृत्तेश्च 'यस्य प्रसादात्' इत्यादि श्रुत्या (नारायण), राजप्रसादसाध्य निगडबन्धनिवृत्ति-दृष्टान्तेन च, परमपुरुषप्रसादसाध्यत्वात् ।

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प्रसादस्य च 'प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थम्।' (गी. ७,१७) इत्यादिना ज्ञानसाध्यत्वात्। समधिगम्यपुरुषज्ञानस्य च वेदैरेव उत्पाद्यत्वात् वेदानां विष्ण्वर्थत्व सिद्धिः ॥ तथा च प्रयोगः – सर्वे वेदा विष्णु-ज्ञानजनकाः। तत्साध्यमोक्षार्थं प्रवृत्तत्वात्। यो यत्साध्यः यदर्थं प्रयुक्तः स तज्जनकः। यथा घटादिज्ञानसाध्यघटादिव्यवहारार्थं प्रवृत्तः घटादिशब्द इत्यादिरूपेण वा ध्येयः ॥

६. अपि च। न आपातप्रतीत एव श्रुत्यर्थः। तथात्वे, कर्मतन्त्रे नामपदीय-चित्राज्याधिकरणे 'आज्यैः स्तुवते।' इति वाक्यस्थ आज्यपदस्य 'यदाजमीयुः तदाज्यानां आज्यत्वम्।' इति वाचनिकनिरुक्त्यादिबलेन मन्त्रार्थत्वं नोच्येत। ब्रह्मतन्त्रे च आकाशाधिकरणादौ 'आकाश इति होवाच।' इत्यादिवाक्यस्थ (छां उ. १.९) आकाशादिशब्दस्य, 'स एव परोऽवरीयान्।' इत्यादिवाक्यशेषस्थ (छा.उ. १,९) लिङ्गादिबलेन विष्ण्वर्थत्वं नोच्येत। किंतु मीमांसित एव। मीमांसा च उपक्रमोपसंहाराभ्यासापूर्वताफलार्थवादोपपत्तीनां श्रुतिर्लिंगवाक्यप्रकरणस्थानसमाख्यानां च आनुगुण्यानुसन्धानम् ॥

७. तथा च, अग्न्यादि शब्दानां निगमनिघिण्ड्वादिरूपानुशासनबलेन आग्नेयादिकर्मादि सिद्धरूपप्रयोजनबलेन च प्रसिद्धाग्न्यादौ इव ''ॐ चमसवदविशेषात् ॐ।' (ब्र.सू. १.४.९) इत्यादौ भाष्योक्तदिशा ''नामानि सर्वाणि यमाविशन्ति तं वै विष्णुं परममुदाहरन्ति।'' (भाल्लवेयश्रुति), ''हन्तैतमेव पुरुषं सर्वाणि नामान्यभिवदन्ति।'' (भाष्ये १,४,२४), इति, ''सर्वनामा सर्वकर्मा सर्वलिङ्गः।'' ((म. ३०) इति, 'यो देवानां नामधा एक एव।' ऋग्वेदे (१०,८२,३) इत्यादि श्रुतिभिश्च ''सर्वच्छन्दोभिधो ह्येष सर्वदेवाभधो ह्यसै।'' (वामनपुराणे) इत्यादि स्मृतिभिश्च सामान्यतः,

'इन्द्रं मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहुरथो
दिव्यः सुपर्णो गरुत्मान्।'
(ऋ. १,१६४,८६)

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इति,

'यमिन्द्रमाहुर्वरुणं यमाहुर्यं
मित्रमाहुर्यमु सत्यमाहुः ।'
(आ.उ.)

इत्यादि श्रुतिभिः,

'बृंहणाद् ब्रह्मनामासौ ऐश्वर्यादिन्द्र उच्यते ।
एवं नानाविधैः शब्दैः एक एव त्रिविक्रमः ।
वेदेषु सपुराणेषु गीयते पुरुषोत्तमः ।।'
(ब्रह्माण्डपुराणे)

इत्यादि स्मृतिभिश्च विशिष्यानुशासनरूपाभिः विष्णौ अपि शक्तेः सिद्धत्वेन विष्ण्वर्थत्वस्यापि मन्त्रेषु न्याय्यत्वात् ॥

८. एवं हि तत्वविदां मतं द्विविधा ह्यग्न्यादि शब्दाः ।

(i) नीरसंवलितक्षीरवत्, अयः पिण्डसमारूढवह्निवच्च ॥

अग्न्यादि तत्तज्जीवचिता संवलितं यद् भगवच्चिद्रूपं विशिष्टं सपिण्डं तद्वाचिनः केचित् ।

(ii) केवलशुद्धचिद्वाचिनः केचित् ।

इति । शुद्धचिद्वाचिनोऽपि कश्चिद् भगवच्चिद्वाचिनो, जीवचिद्वाचिनश्चेति द्विधा ।

तत्र आद्याः, 'अग्निमीळे ।' (ऋ. १.१.१) इत्यादौ प्रसिद्धाग्न्यादिदेवं विष्णुं च वक्ष्यमाण-परममुख्य-मुख्यवृत्तिभ्यां, 'गङ्गायां मीनघोषौ ।' इत्यत्र मुख्यामुख्यवृत्तिभ्यां प्रवाहतीररूपार्थद्वयं

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गङ्गापदमिव, 'राजा कुवलयोल्लासी ।' इत्यादौ रूढियोगाभ्यां कुमुदभूवलयरूपार्थद्वयं कुवलयपदमिव, युगपदेव व्युत्पत्तिमतः प्रत्यापयन्ति ॥

अन्त्यास्तु, 'अव्यक्तात्पुरुषः परः ।' (काठ. १.३,११) इत्यादौ अव्यक्तादिपदं प्रकृतीश्वरौ इव, 'शरीररूपकविन्यस्तगृहीतेः ।' (१,४,१) इति न्यायात्, 'अयमग्निर्वैश्वानरः ।' (७,९) इति काण्वश्रुत्यादौ, भगवच्चिन्मात्रवाचिनः तदेव प्रत्यापयन्ति ॥

'इन्द्रस्यात्मा ।' (तै.आ. ३,११,३), 'वायोरात्मानम् ।' (तै.आ. ३,११,६) इत्यादौ, 'परिम्रियन्ते विद्युद्वृष्टिश्चन्द्रमा आदित्योऽग्निः ।' (ऐ.ब्रा. ८,६,३८) इत्यादौ, 'भयादस्याग्निस्तपति ।' (का.उ. २,३,३) इत्यादौ च, केवलाग्न्यादि चिद्वाचिनः तन्मात्रमेव प्रत्यापयन्तीति । तत्रापि तदधीनत्व न्यायानुसन्धाने तु विष्णवर्थत्वधीः अस्त्येव ॥

उक्तं हि अनुव्याख्याने (१,४,११) –

'तेषु तेषु पदार्थेषु रूढिरङ्गीकृता यतः ।
प्रयोजनबहुत्वेन तस्य तस्याविरोधतः ॥
उपदेशादि सामर्थ्याद् विष्णौ शक्तिश्च गृह्यते ।
तथाप्येतद्विरोधे तु तद्वचित्वमपोद्यते ॥'

इत्यादि । तथा (१,४३) –

'स्वातन्त्र्यार्थमभिप्रेत्य दोषशब्दाश्च विष्णवि ।'

इति च ।

९. ननु च 'नामानि सर्वाणि ।' (भाल्लवेयश्रुतौ) श्रुतिरप्रसिद्धा । 'यो देवानाम् ।' (ऋ. १०,८२,३) इत्यादिका तु विश्वकर्मसूक्तस्था । कथं विष्णोः सर्वदेवनामवाच्यतया नामधारकत्वो

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क्तिपरा ? सूक्तानां विष्ण्वर्थत्वे विवदमानं प्रति तद्वाक्यस्य विष्णुपरत्वासिद्धेः। अन्यथा, अन्योन्याश्रयात्॥

इति चेत्, मैवं वोचः। अर्वाचीनानां अप्रसिद्धत्वेऽपि अनेकशाखाभिज्ञभाष्यकाराद्युक्तवाक्ये श्रुतित्वासन्देहात्। अन्यथा, शाबरभाष्यादौ औदुम्बराद्यधिकरणेषु 'ऊर्जपशूनाप्नोत्यूर्जेऽवरुध्य।' इत्यवरुध्यान्तवाक्यस्य अप्रसिद्धस्योक्तिः न स्यात्। परभाष्ये च 'ॐ अत एव चोपमा सूर्यकादिवत् ॐ।' (३,२,१८) इत्यादौ 'यथा ह्ययं ज्योतिरात्मा विवस्वान्।' इत्यादि अप्रसिद्ध श्रुत्युक्तिः न स्यात्। श्रीभाष्ये च 'ॐ ज्योतिश्चरण' (१,१,२४) इत्यत्र

'इन्द्रः शचीपतिर्बलेन पीडितः।
दुश्च्यवनो वृषा समुत्ससास हि॥'

इत्यादि अप्रसिद्धवाक्योक्तिः न स्यात्।

यद्यपि 'नामधा' (ऋ. १०,८२,३) इति वाक्यं विश्वकर्मसूक्तस्थं इति तत्रोक्तः समाधिः न आपातप्रतीत एव श्रुत्यर्थः, अपि तु मीमांसित एव इति। तथा च तत्र सूक्ते 'अजस्य नाभावध्येकमर्पितम्। (ऋ. १०,८२,६) इति वाक्यशेषोक्तेन 'अजस्य नाभौ' इति

"यस्य नाभेरभूत् श्रुतेः पुष्करं लोकसारम्।
तस्मै नमो व्यस्तसमस्तविश्वविभूतये
विष्णवे लोककर्त्रे॥"

इति स्कान्दस्मृतिसिद्धपद्मनाभत्वलिङ्गेन निरवकाशेन विश्वकर्मश्रुतिसूक्तयोः विष्णौ दत्तपदत्वात्॥

१०. न चैवमपि 'तत्रापि यौगिको मुख्यः सर्वत्रास्ति स वैदिके।' इति कर्मनिर्णयोक्त्या वक्ष्यमाणदिशा च विष्णौ शब्दानां यौगिकत्वात् योगात् रूढेः रथकाराधिकरणन्यायेन बलवत्तया न

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मन्त्रेषु अग्न्यादिशब्दैः विष्णुधीः इति वाच्यम्। अङ्गरूढितो वाचनिकयोगस्य निरवकाशत्वेन 'आनर्थक्यप्रतिहतानां विपरीतं बलाबलम्। इति न्यायेन बलवत्त्वात्। अत एव 'ॐ कम्पनात् ॐ' (१,३,३९) इत्यत्र ''महद्भयं वज्रमुद्यतम्।'' (काठ. २,३,२) इति वाक्ये वज्रशब्देन रूढ्यैव इन्द्रायुधस्य कृत्रिमाकृत्रिमयोः कृत्रिमस्य ग्राह्यत्वात्, 'यू स्त्र्याख्यौ नदी' इति साङ्केतिककृत्रिमनद्या एव 'अण्वद्याः' इत्यादौ ग्रहणमिव। अन्यथा संज्ञाकरणानर्थक्यात् इत्युक्तम्। तदुक्तं चन्द्रिकायां –

'श्रुत्यर्थनिर्णयार्थत्वात् स्मृतेस्तत्र निरूपितः।
अर्थो ग्राह्यो वेदवाक्ये तदभावे तु लौकिकः ॥'

इति ॥

अत्र वक्ष्यमाणाग्न्यादिशब्दयोगस्य वेदव्यासकृतनिरुक्त्यादि स्मृतिसिद्धत्वात् इन्द्राग्न्यादिशब्द-प्रवृत्तिनिमित्तस्य परमैश्वर्यादेः अनन्याधीनत्व-निरवधिकत्वाभ्यां

'न ते॑ विष्णो॒ जाय॑मानो॒ न जा॒तः।
(ऋ. ७,९९,२)

इत्यादिश्रुतिस्मृतिबलेन विष्णौ एव मुख्यतः सम्भवेन योगस्य महायोगरूपत्वाच्च हरौ योगोऽपि बलवानेव। निमित्ताधिक्ये नैमित्तिकोत्कर्षस्य न्याय्यत्वात्।

किंच, 'इन्द्रं॒ मित्रम्' (ऋ. १,१६४,४६)

इत्यादि श्रुतौ 'आ॒हुः' इत्युक्तं प्रयोगबाहुल्यरूपलिङ्गबलेन हरौ विद्वद्रूढेः अनुमानाच्च। सा च पूर्वतन्त्रस्थ अध्यायतृतीयपादीयव्यवहाराधिकरणोक्तदिशा अङ्गरूढितो बलवती, योगवृत्तौ अल्पत्वमहत्त्वयोः शब्दप्रवृत्तिनिमित्तस्य अल्पत्वमहत्त्वाभ्यामेव सिद्धत्वात्। रूढौ अङ्गरूढिः विद्वद्रूढिः इति द्वैविध्यस्य तु 'ॐ समाकर्षात् ॐ' (१,७,१६) इत्यधिकरणे चन्द्रिकादौ समर्थनात्॥

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न च 'इन्द्रम्' (ऋ. १,१६४,४६) इत्यादिकं अभेदोक्तिपरम्। न शब्दवाच्यत्वोक्तिपरं इति वाच्यम्। ऐतरेयभाष्येऽन्तर्नयचन्द्रिकायां चास्य निरासात्। अपि च, ऐतरेये (२,२,१) 'तं यच्छन्तं वर्षाण्यभ्यार्चत्।' इत्यादौ, 'सर्वे वेदाः सर्वे घोषाः एकैव व्याहृतिः प्राण एव प्राण ऋच इत्येव विद्यात्।' (२,२,२) इत्यन्तवाक्ये 'एतम्' इत्यनेन 'प्राणस्तं' (२,१,८) इत्यत्र ब्रह्मत्वेन निर्णीतं, 'प्राणो ह्येष य एष तपति।' (२,२,१) इति पूर्ववाक्यस्थं प्राणं परामृश्य पुष्कलावयवार्थोक्त्या महायोगेन 'आचक्षते।' इत्युक्त्या, विद्वद्रूढ्या च लौकिरूढिप्राबल्यप्रसक्तं अन्येषां मुख्यत्वं अवधारणेन निरस्य, 'तस्माच्छातर्चिनस्तस्माच्छतर्चिन इत्याचक्षते।' (२,२,१) इत्यादि रूपेणाभ्यासेन सतात्पर्यं विष्णवौ सर्वशब्दमुख्यार्थत्वस्योक्तिपूर्वं सर्ववेदानां विष्णुपरत्वस्योक्तत्वेन मन्त्रेषु अग्न्यादौ अज्ञप्रसिद्धिमात्रेण विष्णुप्रतीत्यपहारो न शक्यः। तदुक्तं अनुव्याख्याने (१,४,११) –

'आचक्षत इति ह्यत्र सन्तमित्यवधारणात्।
योगस्य रूढेः प्राबल्यं विद्वद्रूढिं च तत्र गाम्।
बहुशो दर्शयत्यञ्जस्तात्पर्यात् सनिरुक्तिकम्॥'

इति॥

११. 'अर्व स्वराति गर्गरो गोधा परि सनिष्वणत्।
पिङ्गपरि चनिष्कददिन्द्राय ब्रह्मोद्यतम्॥
(ऋ. ८,६९,९)

इति श्रुतौ गर्गरगोधादिशब्दानां अपि इन्द्रशब्दिते परमेश्वरे विष्णौ मन्त्रशास्त्रसिद्धनाद-रूपवर्णाभिव्यक्तिद्वारा वाचकत्वमुक्त्वा ब्रह्मशब्दार्थस्य वेदस्य विशिष्य तद्वाचित्वोक्तेश्च। न च इन्द्रशब्दः पुरन्दरपरः। प्रागुक्त महायोगविद्वद्रूढिविरोधात्। इन्द्रस्य गोधादि शब्दवाच्यत्वस्य मुख्यतो वेदादिबोध्यत्वस्य च बाधाच्च॥

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'मत्सि सोम वरुणं मत्सि मित्रं
मत्सीन्द्रमिन्दो पवमान विष्णुम् ॥
(ऋ. ९,९०,५)

इति सामानाधिकरण्येन विशिष्य इन्द्रशब्दस्य विष्णौ सिद्धत्वाच्च –

'णकारो बलं षकारः प्राण आत्मा ।'

इति (ऐ. ३०,२,२,६) विष्णुशब्दान्तर्गत णकार षकारयोः बलचेष्टार्थकत्वं उक्त्वा

'स यो हेतौ णकारषकारौ अनुसंहितं ऋचो वेद ।'

इत्यैतरेयश्रुतौ (३,२,६) णकारषाकारार्थो वेदे सर्वत्र पूर्वोत्तरवर्णसंहितार्थ इत्युक्तत्वाच्च ॥

'अः इति ब्रह्म ।' (ऐ. ३०२,३,६) इति ब्रह्मवाचितयोक्तेन अकारेण सह सर्वशब्दानां समानार्थत्वस्य 'अकारो वै सर्वा वाक् ।' (ऐ. ३०२,३,६) इति श्रुतौ 'अकारः सर्ववागात्मा परब्रह्माभिधायकः ।' (गरुडपुराणे) इति स्मृतौ च उक्तत्वाच्च ।

'सृजतो हि ते श्रुतयोऽनुवर्तन्ते नैवासृजतः
कं वा विदधते कं वा निषेधन्ति
स्तुतिमात्रा एव ते स्युः ॥

इति श्रुतिगीतातात्पर्योक्त (शाण्डिल्य) श्रुतौ विध्यादिभागस्यापि भगवतः स्तुतित्वोक्तेश्च ॥

'यद्वै किंचैतदध्यगीष्ठा नामैवैतत्
नाम वा ऋग्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेद आथर्वणश्चतुर्थः ॥

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इत्यादिना, 'नामैवैतत् ।' इत्यन्तेन च्छान्दोग्ये सप्तमाध्याये नारदसनत्कुमारसंवादे

'यद्वाच ओमीति यच्च नेति यच्चास्याः क्रूरं
यदु चोल्बणिष्णु तद्वियूय कवयोऽन्वविन्दन्
नामायत्ता समतृप्यञ्छ्रुतेऽधि ॥'

इत्यैतरेये (२,३,८) च, सर्ववैदिकशब्दानां भगवन्नामतोक्तेश्च। तथा च सूत्रम् – 'ॐ संज्ञातश्चेत्तदुक्तमस्ति तु तदपि ॐ। (३,३,९) इति, 'सोऽहं (भगवो) नामविदेव' (छा. ३०७,१) इति श्रुत्या सर्वविद्यानां भगवत्संज्ञात्वात् भगवद्गुणाभिधायकत्वात् सर्ववेदोक्तगुणोपसंहारः कार्य इति चेत् उक्तं उपसंहारसूत्र इति व्याख्यानात् ॥

१२. अपि च। 'कश्चन्द॑सां॒ योग॒मा वे॑द॒ धीरः॒ ।' (ऋ. १०,११४,९) इति श्रुतौ,

'मां विधत्तेऽभिधत्ते मां विकल्प्योऽपोह्य इत्यहम् ।
इत्यस्या हृदयं साक्षान्नान्यो मद्वेद कश्चन ॥'

(भागवते ११,२१,४३) इति स्मृतौ, विधिभागदेवताभागादिरपि मामेव बोधयतीत्यर्थस्य दुर्ज्ञानत्वोक्तेश्च। 'नारायणपरा वेदा देवा नारयणाङ्गजाः ।' इति द्वितीय स्कन्धपञ्चमाध्याये, 'वासुदेवपरा वेदा वासुदेवपरा मखाः ।' इति प्रथमस्कन्ध द्वितीयाध्याये,

वेदे रामायणे चैव पुराणे भारते तथा।
आदावन्ते च मध्ये च विष्णुः सर्वत्र गीयते ॥'

इति (हरिवंशे) स्मृतौ च सर्वत्र विष्णुपरत्वोक्तेश्च।

'वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यः ।' (गी. १५,१४) इत्यवधारणेन कृष्णेन स्वस्यैव परममुख्यत्वेन

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सर्ववेदप्रतिपाद्यतोक्तेश्च। 'सर्वे वेदा यत्पदमामनन्ति।' (काठ.उ. १,२,१४) इत्यत्र अस्य मुख्यतोऽशेषवेदवेद्यत्वमुक्त्वा 'तद्विष्णोः परमं पदम्।'(काठ.उ. १,३,९) इत्युपसंहाराच्च काठके॥

समन्वयसूत्रे (१,१,१२) सूत्रकृतापि अशेषवेदसमन्वयं हरौ प्रतिज्ञाय 'ॐ आनन्दमयोऽभ्यासात् ॐ।' इत्यादिनाध्यायेन तस्य प्रपञ्चनाच्च 'ॐ ज्योतिश्चरणाभिधानात् ॐ।' (१,१,२४) इत्यत्र अशेषसूक्तोपलक्षकत्वेन,

'वि मे कर्णा पतयतो वि चक्षुर्वीइदं ज्योतिः।'

(ऋ. ६,९,६) इत्यग्निसूक्तस्य कर्णादिविदूरत्वादि रूपान्यत्रानवकाशविष्णुलिङ्गेन विष्णुपरत्व समर्थनाच्च॥

१३. विष्ण्वर्थत्वे वेदानां अपूर्वतारूपस्य तात्पर्यलिङ्गस्य प्रतीत्या मोक्षपरत्वाच्च। 'तात्पर्यं नैव दूषणे' (१,२,२) इत्यनुव्याख्याद्युक्तदिशा

'न तादृशी प्रीतिरीड्यस्य विष्णोर्गुणोत्कर्षज्ञातरि
यादृशी स्यात्।
तत्प्रीणनान्मोक्षमाप्नोति सर्वस्ततो वेदास्तत्पराः
सर्व एव॥'

इति (सौपर्ण) श्रुत्या, 'प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहम्।' (गी. ७,१७) इति स्मृत्या च विष्णुप्रतिपादने तज्ज्ञानसाध्यमोक्षाख्यमहाफलवत्त्वरूपस्य,

'तस्तन्न वेद किमृचा करिष्यति।'
(ऋ. १,१६४,३९)

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इत्यादेः विपक्षे निन्दारूपार्थवादस्य,

'य इत्तद्विदुस्त इमे समासते ।'
(ऋ. १,१६४,३९)

इति स्तुतिरूपार्थवादस्य च भावाच्च। अनुक्रमणिकायामपि 'एकैव वा महानात्मा देवता।' इति सर्वसूक्तानां परमात्मदेवतात्वस्योक्तत्वाच्च ॥

१४. यत्तु, एवं सति विष्ण्वर्थत्वेनैव अलं, किमग्न्यादि देवतापरत्वेनापि, गौरवात् ? इति। तन्न। 'ॐ कल्पनोपदेशात्' (१,४,११) इति सूत्रतात्पर्यनिरूपणे अनुव्याख्याने –

'तेषु तेषु पदार्थेषु रूढिरङ्गीकृता यतः।
प्रयोजनबहुत्वेन तस्य तस्याविरोधतः।
उपदेशादि सामर्थ्याद्विष्णौ शक्तिश्च गृह्यते ॥'

इति अग्न्यादिदेवतास्वरूप सिद्ध्यादिबहुप्रयोजनाय तत्तद्देवतार्थकत्वस्यापि आवश्यकत्वोक्तेः निगमनिघण्टुव्याकरणादि सिद्धव्युत्पत्तिलभ्य अग्न्यादि देवतार्थकत्वस्य त्यागायोगाच्च।

'त्रयोऽर्थाः सर्ववेदेषु दशार्थाः सर्वभारते।
विष्णोः सहस्रनामापि निरन्तरशतार्थकम् ॥'

इति स्कान्दस्मृत्या त्र्यर्थत्वस्योक्तत्वाच्च। 'ॐ अन्यार्थं तु जैमिनिः।' (१,४,१९) इत्यादौ सूत्रकृता ब्रह्मज्ञानार्थत्वेन कर्मदेवतारूपान्तरस्योक्तत्वाच्च ॥

१५. ननु एवं 'नामानि विश्वाभि न सन्ति लोके।' इति (भाल्लवेयश्रुतौ अन्यस्य वाच्यत्वनिरासपूर्वकं विष्णुवाचित्वोक्तिविरोधः। तथा 'वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यः।' (गी. १४,१४)

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इति स्मृतौ अवधारणोक्ति विरोधः। तथा 'ॐ तत्तु समन्वयात् ॐ। (१,१,४) इत्यत्र अवधारणार्थक 'तु' शब्देन विष्ण्वाख्यं ब्रह्मैव सर्वशास्त्रप्रतिपाद्यमिति प्रतिज्ञाय, 'ॐ आनन्दमयोऽभ्यासात् ॐ।' (१,१,१२) इत्यादिना 'ॐ एतेन सर्वे व्याख्याता व्याख्याताः ॐ। (१,४,२९) इत्यन्तेन प्रतिनयं समन्वयसूत्रात् 'तत्तु' इति पदमनुवृत्य आनन्दमयादि शब्दार्थो विष्णुरेव, इन्द्रादि शब्दार्थो विष्णुरेव, आकाशप्राणाग्निसूक्तस्थज्योतिरादि शब्दार्थो विष्णुरेव, इति प्रमाणोक्तिपूर्वं सर्वशब्दानां विष्णुमात्रार्थत्वसमर्थनाच्च तद्विरोधः।

वैश्वानरनये वैश्रानरनामसूक्तादि सर्ववैश्वनरविद्यासु 'ॐ अत एव न देवता भूतं च ॐ।' (१,२,२७) इति सूत्रकृता कण्ठरवेणैव अन्यस्य प्रतिपाद्यत्वनिरासात् विरोधश्च। 'तमेवैकं जानथ आत्मानं अन्या वाचो विमुञ्चथ।' (आ.उ. १,३,१४) इत्यस्य ज्ञेयत्वनिरासविरोधश्च। अत एव अन्यप्रतिपादनस्य क्वापि अनभिमतत्वादेव, 'अनाद्यनन्तं महतः परं ध्रुवम्।' (काठ.उ. १,३,१४) इति वाक्ये महत्परत्वलिङ्गेन प्रधानं प्रतिपाद्यत इति प्राप्ते, 'ॐ ज्ञेयत्वावचनाच्च ॐ।' (१,४,४) इति सूत्रे मुमुक्षुज्ञेयत्वं क्वापि विष्णोरन्यस्य नोच्यत इत्युक्तम्॥

इति चेत्, मैवम्। मुख्यवृत्त्या अन्यार्थकत्वेऽपि परममुख्यवृत्त्या एव अन्यार्थकत्वस्य श्रुतिसूत्रादौ निरासात्। 'अन्या वाचो विमुञ्चथ।' इत्यादि श्रुतिसूत्रयोः प्राधान्येन अन्यस्य ज्ञेयत्वनिरासपरत्वोपपत्तेः। अत एव, 'ॐ अङ्गावबद्धास्तु न शाखासु हि प्रतिवेदम् ॐ।' (३,३,५७) इत्युपासनापादीयाधिकरणे ब्रह्मरुद्रेन्द्रमित्रावरुणाद्यङ्गदेवतावबद्धाः तद्विषया इति यावत्, उपासना नमनपूजनमननादयः कर्तव्या, इत्युक्त्वा 'ॐ मन्त्रादिवद्वा विरोधः ॐ।' (३,३,५८) इति गुणसूत्रे यथा अधमदेवतापरमन्त्रः तदुत्तमदेवतापरत्वेन ज्ञेयाः, तथा अधमदेवतागुणः तदुत्तमदेवतासु ज्ञेया ध्येयाश्च; उत्तमदेवतागुणा अधमदेवतासु न ध्येया न ज्ञेयाश्च; यथोत्तमदेवतापरत्वेन प्रतीता मन्त्रा अधमदेवतापरत्वेन न ज्ञेयास्तथेति चोक्तम्॥

न च अनेकार्थत्वे वाक्यभेदः। 'ॐ समाकर्षात् ॐ।' (१,४,१६) इति नयसिद्धेन परममुख्य-मुख्यवृत्तिभेदेन विष्ण्वर्थत्व-तदन्यार्थत्वयोः अभ्युपगमात्। तुल्यवृत्त्या अनेकार्थत्वे अक्षादि शब्दवत्

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अनेकार्थत्वापत्त्या वाक्यभेदादि दोषः स्यात्। तदुक्तं अनुव्याख्याने (१,४,११) – 'तस्मात् परममुख्यत्वं विष्णौ, अन्यत्र मुख्यता।' इति। अत एव न सूक्तस्य व्यवस्थानुपपत्तिदोषः। अग्न्यादिदेवतापरत्वस्यापि सत्त्वेन अग्न्यादिसूक्तव्यवस्थोपपत्तेः॥

१६. न चैवं उभयत्र तात्पर्ये तात्पर्यभेदात् तन्निबन्धन वाक्यभेदः शंक्यः। महातात्पर्यार्थस्यैकत्वात्।

'सत्त्वोत्कर्षे देवदेवस्य विष्णोर्महातात्पर्यं
नैव चान्यत्र सत्यम्।
अवान्तरं तत्परत्वं तदन्यत् सर्वागमानां
पुरुषार्थस्ततोऽतः॥'

इति (पैङ्गि) श्रुतौ,

'सर्वज्ञं सर्वकर्तारं नारायणमनामयम्।
सर्वोत्तमं ज्ञापयन्ति महातात्पर्यमत्र हि॥
सर्वेषामपि वेदानां इतिहासपुराणयोः।
प्रमाणानां च सर्वेषां तदर्थं चान्यदुच्यते॥'

इत्यादि नारदीयपुराणादौ च महातात्पर्य-अवान्तरतात्पर्यभेदेन अनेकार्थत्वोक्तेः। अग्न्यादिसूक्ते भगवदुपासकानां अग्न्याद्यधिष्ठानेष्वेव भगवतः (१) अनुस्मर्तव्यत्व (२) अभिव्यज्यमानत्व (३) प्राप्यत्व रूप-निमित्तत्रयेण 'इदमग्निसूक्तं, इदं वायुसूक्तं' इत्यादि व्यवस्थाया वैश्वानरनयान्ते सूत्रकारेणैव समर्थनाच्च॥

न चैवं सौर-सावित्रादि सूक्तभेदायोगो हरिसूक्त-विष्णुसूक्तादि भेदायोगश्च। तत्र भगवदभिव्यक्त्यादिकं प्रत्यधिष्ठानभेदस्यापि अभावात्, हरिसूक्तादौ अधिष्ठानस्यैव अभावादिति शंक्यम्। एवं तर्हि,

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'पृथग्रूपाणि विष्णोस्तु देवतान्तरगाणि च।
अग्न्यादिसूक्तवाच्यानि नाम्ना सूक्तभिदा भवेत् ॥'

इति ऋग्भाष्योक्तदिशा अग्न्यादिमानभेदात् अग्न्यादिसूक्तव्यवस्थाऽस्तु ॥

यापि 'इदं अग्निसूक्तमेव, न तु विष्णुसूक्तं' इत्यादि अध्यापकप्रसिद्धिः, सापि सूक्तव्यवस्थापक विष्ण्वादिनाम्नां व्यवस्थितत्वेन अग्न्यादिसूक्तेषु अभावात् 'इदं हि हरिसूक्तं, न तु विष्णुसूक्तं' इति प्रसिद्धिवत् अज्ञानमूलेति 'ॐ ज्योतिश्चरणाभिधानात् ॐ' (१,१,२४) इत्यत्र चन्द्रिकोक्तदिशा युक्ता। यदपि अग्न्यादिसूक्तानां विष्ण्वर्थकत्वेऽभिमते सति 'नारायणो वा इदमग्र आसीत्' इत्यादाविव, 'विष्णुमीळे पुरोहितम्' (ऋ. १.१.१), 'विष्णवाया हि दर्शत' (ऋ. १.२.१) इत्यादिरूपेण प्रसिद्धविष्ण्वादिशब्दप्रयोगः स्यादिति चोद्यम्। तदपि अग्न्यादि देवतापरत्वस्यापि सत्त्वात् अग्न्यादिशब्दप्रवृत्तिनिमित्त अग्न्यादिगुणविशिष्टत्वेन उपासनार्थं अग्न्यादिशब्दप्रयोग इति छन्दोनये सूत्रकृतैव 'तथा चेतोर्पणनिगदात्' (१.१.२५) इति समाधानाद्वा निरस्तं ध्येयम् ॥

न च अत्र उपासनाया अश्रवणं शंक्यम्। 'ईळे' इत्युक्तस्तुतेः गुणानुसन्धानपूर्वकत्वात्। 'ॐ आध्यानाय प्रयोजनाभावात् ॐ।' (३,३,१५) इति न्यायाच्च। तत्र हि सर्वत्र गुणोक्तेः प्रयोजनान्तराभावेन आध्यानार्थत्वज्ञानार्थत्वयोः उक्तेरिति संक्षेपः ॥

इति श्रीमन्मन्त्रार्थमञ्जर्यां श्रीराघवेन्द्रयतिविरचितायां
उपोद्घातः ॥

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- (16) -

The Nairuktās suppose that the mantras of *Ṛgveda* admit of three levels of interpretation : ritualistic (adhi-yajña), mythical (adhi-daiva) and spiritual (adhyātma). The association of Vedic mantras with ritualistic acts is no doubt an ancient and persistent one. The Brāhmaṇa texts illustrate the ritualistic interpretation. The mythical interpretation (also called aitihāsika) is illustrated by Śaunaka's *Bṛhaddevatā.* The spiritual interpretation is given in the upanishads, and in the commentaries of Bhaṭṭa-Bhāskara, Ānanda-tīrtha, Anantāchārya and Sri Aurobindo in recent years.

The Vedic study (svādhyāya) is carried on in the general framework of ritualistic interpretation. The insistence on such study expressed in prescriptions like स्वाध्यायोऽध्येतव्यः । is to be found in the Brāhmaṇa texts; this particular 'vidhi' is from *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (11,5,7,2). The prevailing idea in the Brāhmaṇa texts is that the mantras are related to ritualistic acts (कर्मणां सम्बन्धः मन्त्रैः सह ।) The expression 'viniyoga' (use, application) for a mantra refers to the reciprocal relation between the ritualistic act and the mantra (कर्ममन्त्रयोः पारस्परिकं संबन्धः ।)

The viniyoga is of two kinds: one is 'general' (sāmānya), where the entire Vedic corpus is recited in brahma-yajña, japa, pārāyaṇa as daily routine; and the other is 'specific' (viśesha), where during a particular ritual certain sūktas, and three or single mantras are recited in specific sequences as prescribed in *Śrunta-sūtras* following Brāhmaṇa passages.

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सामान्यविनियोगो ब्रह्मयज्ञजपादौ । विशेषविनियोगस्तु तत्तत् क्रतौ सूत्रकारेण प्रदर्शितः । स च त्रिविधः । सूक्तविनियोगः तृचादिविनियोगः एकैकस्या ऋचो विनियोगश्चेति ॥

And it involves the mention of the sage-seer of the mantra, the deity of the mantra and the specific metrical form the mantra takes. The performer of the ritual has to be aware of these details constantly with regard to each mantra. Without such awareness, the ritualistic act done would be in vain. We read in *Ārsheya-brāhmaṇa* (1,1) :

योह वा अविदितार्षेयच्छन्दोदैवतब्राह्मणेन मन्त्रेण याजयति वाध्यापयति वा स्थाणुं वर्छति गर्तं वा पद्यति प्र वा मीयते पापीयान् भवति ।...तस्मादेतानि मन्त्रे तन्त्रे विद्यात् ॥

The viniyoga of ṛshi, devatā and chhandas are to be found even in the Brāhmaṇa texts. However, the *Anukramaṇis* (indeces, arrangements, tables) are well-prepared manuals, where the details are methodically provided for each mantra. We have, for instance, several anukramaṇis for Ṛgveda : *Ṛshyanukramaṇī, Chhandonukramaṇī, Devatānukramaṇī, Anuvākānukramaṇī, Sūktānukramaṇī, Ṛgvidhāna* (giving viniyoga, phala and vidhi; a versified text ascribed to Śaunaka, in five chapters and 758 verses), *Pāda-vidhāna* (a short work of fourteen verses in prose and verse). Even the well-known *Bṛhaddevatā* of Śaunaka is described Shaḍguru-śishya (in his *Vedārtha-dīpikā)* as an anukramaṇī.

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But the most often employed one is Kātyāyana's *Sarvānukramaṇī.* The author was celebrated as an authority on Śrauta and Smārta Prātiśākhyas. Prātiśākhyas are companion works which give correct information about pronunciation of phonemes, (varṇsochchāraṇa), the word order of a mantra (pada-pāṭha), the order in recital (krama-pāṭha), the joining of words (sandhi), and svara. Each Veda has prātiśākhyas. On Ṛgveda, *Chhando-vichiti, Jaṭā-pāṭha* and *Ṛk-prātiśākhya* are important. The last mentioned work is in eighteen paṭalas, also containing kārikās. It relates to Śākala-śākhā and provides rules on svara, varṇa, sandhi and chhandas. There is a commentary (vṛtti) on this work by Vishṇumitra.

Kātyāyana's *Sarvānukramaṇī* appears to have been prepared around B.C. 400. It is in the form of 1,177 sūtras (aphorisms), arranged in two chapters (prakaraṇa) : (1) Paribhāshā (explanatory rules, definitions) in 12 sections (kaṇḍikas) containing 117 sūtras; and (2) Sarvānukrama (comprehensive indeces), in 64 sections and 1060 sūtras. The work deals with the hymns or sūktas of Śākala-sākhā, their pratīkas (first part of the verse), the number of verses in the hymn (ṛksankhyā), the name of the sage-seer (ṛshi), the deity (devatā) and the metrical form of each verse (chhandas). There are also given occasionally historical or mythological details.

More important than this work, however, is the elaborate gloss (vṛtti) called *Vedārtha-dīpikā* over it by Shaḍguru-śishya (who was so called because he was a disciple of six teachers : Vināyaka, Śūlapāṇi, Mukunda, Sūrya, Vyāsa

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and Śivayogi, and who lived around 1187 A.D.) The colophon gives not only the names of the teachers but tells us what branch of learning was taught by each of them.

सर्वानुक्रमणी सैषा कात्यायनमुनेः कृतिः ।
तस्या वृत्तिरियं चापि समाप्ता षड्गुरोः कृतिः ॥
वेदार्थदीपिका नाम षड्गुरूणां प्रसादतः ।
विनायकः शूलपाणिः मुकुन्दः सूर्यो व्यासः शिवयोगीति षड् वै ॥
नामानि तान् सर्वदा पान्तु मां यैर्वै षड्भिः सप्तविद्यास्तु दत्ता ॥
आद्या सर्वानुक्रमणी द्वितीया महाव्रतं चोपनिषद् द्वयं च ।
महाव्रतं सूत्रमासां तृतीया चत्वारिंशद् ब्राह्मणं वै चतुर्थी ॥
तद्वत्सूत्रं पञ्चमी वै निरुक्तं षष्ठी तु गुह्यं शाकल्यस्य संहिता सप्तमीति ।
इमा दत्ता विद्यास्तु सद्भिर्यैर्वै षड्भ्यो गुरुभ्यो हि नमोऽस्तु तेभ्यः ॥
इति षड्गुरुशिष्येण कृता वेदार्थदीपिका ।
सर्वानुक्रमणीवृत्तिः समाप्तेष्टार्थपुष्टये ॥

॥ समाप्तमिदं शास्त्रं समाप्ता चेयं वृत्तिः ॥

The colophon gives us an insight into the immense and wide-spread learning of this colossal intellect. He was truly a remarkable author in the Middle Ages. His gloss on *Sarvānukramaṇī* is a mine of information regarding the culture of rituals. According to him, the mantras are to be employed in rituals or taught to students only by one who has an understanding of the prescriptions in the Brāhmaṇa texts and the details like the ṛshi, devatā and chhandas of the mantra. Such one will reach absolute welfare (3)

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मन्त्राणां ब्राह्मणर्षेयच्छन्दोदैवतविद्याजनाध्यापनाभ्यां श्रेयोऽधिगच्छति ॥

The understanding of these details while performing a ritual and employing a particular mantra in it, will remind him of the real import of the Veda, and will make him think deeply about the relationship between the portion of the Veda that is employed and the Brāhmaṇa prescriptions :

मन्त्राणां विहितानां पदार्थानामनुष्ठानकाले स्मारकतया ।
मननसाधनभूतानां विनियोज्यवेदभागानां सम्बन्धिनां ब्राह्मणादीनं ज्ञाता ॥

This is an important point. Shaḍguru-śishya distinguishes between the full knowledge of the ṛshi, devatā and chhandas (eshām vid) in a mantra, and the actual performance of a ritual act (anushṭhāna). The successful performance of a ritual act depends on the knowledge of the mantra employed in it. A ritual act (karma), in other words, does not preclude knowledge (jñāna); it depends on it. And the glossator further points out that the knowledge useful in the ritual act is confined to that portion of the Veda which has viniyoga in this act (viniyojya-veda-bhāgānam sambandhinām).

Shaḍguru-śishya also makes it clear that the understanding of the ṛshi, devatā and chhandas of the mantra employed in ritual will contribute towards effective ritual action, whether of the nature of yāgas and yajñas mentioned in the Brāhmaṇas or the prescribed rituals for a householder detailed in the Smṛti manuals (Paribhāshā, 2)

न ह्येतज्ज्ञानमृते (एतस्मात् ज्ञानादृते) श्रौतस्मार्त प्रसिद्धिः ॥

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In the introductory verses of Shaḍguru-śishya to his *Vedārtha-dīpikā*, preserved by Max-Mueller (given as *pariśishṭa* in Vijayappāla's edition, pp. 297-298), we find the Vedic lineage begins with Vedavyāsa and continues through Ugraśrāvas, Śaunaka and Kātyāyana. Śaunaka was the author of ten works including *Brhaddevatā* and several anukramaṇīs. Kātyāyana became proficient in ritual-lore, by the grace of Śaunaka, and wrote his *Sarvānukramaṇī* as a result of his penance and ascetic practices :

शौनकस्य प्रसादेन कर्मज्ञः समपद्यत ॥
तपोयोगान्निर्ममे यः सर्वानुक्रमणीमिमाम् ॥

Shaḍguru-śishya describes him as 'mahāmuni'.

Kātyāyana makes it clear that he follows the Śākala recension of Ṛgveda; he begins his work with the words :

अथ ऋग्वेदाम्नाये शाकलके ।

He points out that Ṛgveda is a śāstra for unravelling the meaning of praṇava (omkāra)

अथ ऋग्वेद इत्यादि तृतीयात्रिष्टुबन्तकम् ।
इदं शास्त्रमधीयानः प्रणवाद्यर्थतामियात् ॥

Being a 'śāstra' signifies the involvement of prātiśākhyas and Anukramaṇīs, along with the ādhyātmika approach to interpret the contents of the Vedas

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in terms of the 'praṇava'. The Vedāṅgas (where the expression 'aṅga' means 'upakārakatva') like Nirukta, Vyākaraṇa, Chhandas and Śikshā. It is also indicated how the Vedāṅgas assist in the understanding of the Vedic import (Vijayapāla, *op. cit.*) :

१. निरुक्तेन मन्त्रार्थप्रतिपत्तेः सन्दिग्धदैवतनिर्णयस्य ।
२. व्याकरणेन वैदिकशब्दस्वरूपनिष्पत्तेः ।
३. छन्दःशास्त्रेण गायत्र्यादिवैदिकछन्दसाम् ।
४. शिक्षया वैदिकवर्णानां निर्दोषोच्चारणस्य ।
५. कल्पेन कर्मविशेषे मन्त्रविनियोगस्य कर्मपौर्वापर्यस्य च ।
६. ज्योतिषेण च कर्माङ्गभूतकालस्य बोधात् ।
तत्तदङ्गं उपकारकं भवति ॥

That the brāhmaṇa-texts grewout of the Vedāṅga Kalpa is evident. They also incorporate to a small extent elements of Nirukta. But Kalpa being essentially oriented to the performance of rituals, its close connection with Yajurveda is easily recognized. The Ṛgvedic mantras are also often employed in the rituals, and it is therefore that we read in *Gopatha-brāhmaṇa* (2,2,6)

एतद्वै यज्ञस्य समृद्धं यद्रूपसमृद्धं यत्कर्म क्रियमाणं ऋग्यजुर्वाभिवदतीति ॥

The Brāhmaṇa texts appear to have arisen to fulfil the need of establishing a rational relationship between mantras (ṛchas) and the rituals. But this is outside the scope of the śāstra status of Ṛgveda.

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- (17) -

Appended below are some of the relevant aphorisms of the Paribhāshā section of Kātyāyana's *Sarvānukramaṇî* along with my notes based on Shaḍguru-śishya's gloss on them. It can be seen that the work closely follows *Bṛhaḍdevatā.*

कात्यायनीय सर्वानुक्रमणी ॥

(परिभाषा ॥)

- I -

(1) अथ ऋग्वेदाम्नाये शाकलके सूक्तप्रतीकऋक्संख्यऋषिदैवतच्छन्दांस्यनु-
क्रमिष्यामो यथोपदेशम् ॥१॥

1. The first aphorism promises that the following details with regard to the Śākalaka recension of Ṛgveda would be given :

1. The first word of the Sūkta (sūktasya pratīkam)
2. The number of ṛchas that are there in the sūkta (sūktagata-ṛchām samkhyā)
3. The sage-seer of the Sūkta (ṛshi)
4. The deity eulogized or referred to in the Sūkta (devatā)
5. The poetic or metrical form in which the Sūkta appears (chhandas)

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2. Ṛgveda, here described as āmnāya (text for continuous recitation and study), is the recension as seen by Śākala (शाकलेन दृष्टे ऋग्वेदरूपे आम्नाये ।) This is as distinct from the Bāshkala recension. The difference between them consists in the eight additional hymns (khila) that are found in Bāshkala are left out in Śākala. The total number of hymns (sūktas) in the former is 1025 while in the latter it is 1017. In one of the mss of Kātyāyana's *Sarvānukramaṇī,* we have this detail :

तदेतत्सूक्तसहस्रं सप्तदशकं सपादाधिकं ऋग्वेदे पारायणपाठे
शाकल्ये शैशिरीयके... ॥

But the edition we have gives a total of 10552 mantras (including Vālakhilya-sūktas) or 10472 (excluding the Vālakhilya-sūktas).

There is some confusion about the total number of mantras (ṛchah) in *Ṛgveda-samhitā.* Śaunaka's *Anuvākānukramaṇī* gives the number as 10,580, while Jagannātha, the glossator of *Sarvānukramaṇī* puts the number at 10552. Mahīdāsa, commenting on *Charaṇa-vyūha* gives the number as 10552 (including Vālakhilya-sūktas) and 10472 (excluding Vālakhilya-sūktas). Venkaṭa-Mādhava, an early commentator on Ṛgveda gives the number as 10402. Dayānanda-Sarasvati counts a total of 10402 mantras, although his calculation summing up the mantras in each maṇḍala gives the number as 10521. It is said that in the Śākala recension we have 10580 ṛchas and 432000 aksharas.

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3. Shaḍguru-śishya explains that the word *Ṛgveda,* here, is called so because of the large number of ṛchas that are contained it (ऋगंशबाहुल्यादृग्वेदः ।). This may appear a strange explanation, for what could Ṛgveda contain other than the ṛchas ? Probably, the glossator means that this Veda contains numerous ṛchas that have no 'viniyoga' in the ritual acts. In Yajurveda and Sāmaveda also there are ṛchas, but they all have their uses in ritual sequences.

4. The details are now explained

i) तत्रादितः प्रतीकम् । The initial word or words of the first verse (ṛk) in a hymn (sūkta) is taken as the nomenclature for the whole hymn (sūkta-pratīka).

ii) ऋक्संख्या ऋचामेकत्वादिः । Some hymns have only a single verse (ṛk) as for instance in 1,99 (जातवेदसे सुनवाम). Others have more verses; the largest number is 58 in 9,97 (अस्य प्रेषाहेमना पूयमानः ।)

iii) ऋषिर्द्रष्टा The sage-seer is one who perceives. The sage-seers have knowledge of the past, present and the future (ऋषयोऽनागतातीतवर्तमानार्थविदिनः ।) अर्त्तेः सनोतेश्च ऋषिशब्दो निरुच्यते । cf. *Taittirīya-āraṇyaka,* 2,9,1.

iv) दानादि सर्वकल्याणगुणयोगी पचाद्यच् देवः । *(Pāṇini* 3,1,134); देवात् तलन्तात् स्वार्थे त्वण् दैवतम् । (*Pāṇini* 5,4,17 and 5,4,38).

The deity (deva or devatā) is endowed with all auspicious attributes like generosity. The expression may be in the masculine or neuter gender (पुंनपुंसकम् ।).

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v) छन्दः पापेभ्यश्छादनात् (*Nirukta,* 7,12). छादयन्ति ह वा एनं छन्दांसि पापात्कर्मणः इति श्रुतेः (*Chhāndogya-upanishat,* 1,4,2, also *Aitareya-āraṇyaka,* 1,6,4). Chhāndas is the metrical form in which the verses (ṛchah) appear. It is so called because it hides one from ills and evil; it takes one away from evil deeds.

(2) व ह्येतज्ज्ञानमृते श्रौतस्मार्तप्रसिद्धिः ॥२॥

Devoid of this knowledge contained in the Sarvānukramaṇī (concerning the sage-seer, deity and the metrical form of the verse or hymn), the ritual acts enjoined in the Kalpa texts, the household-rituals prescribed in the Smṛti texts become ineffectual and wasted.

१. अग्निहोत्रादि विश्वसृजामयनान्तं श्रुतिविहितं कल्पसूत्रे व्याख्यातं कर्म श्रौतम्। निषेकादिस्मशानान्तं स्मृतिगृह्यविहितं स्मार्तम्। सदाचारादि कर्म।

२. प्रसिद्धः फलप्रदानम्।

३. एतज्ज्ञानम्। प्रकृतत्वात् सर्वानुक्रमणीगतं ज्ञानम्। अस्माज्ज्ञानादृते श्रौतस्मार्तकर्मणां फलप्रदानसंभवाय वादोऽपि नास्ति। ऋष्याद्यज्ञानेन मन्त्रकण्टकत्वाद्यागकण्टकत्वाच्चानधिकृतत्वात् सर्वत्र।...एतदज्ञस्य सर्वकर्मणो नैष्फल्यदोष उक्तः॥

अथ विदुषः फलमाह –

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(3) मन्त्राणां ब्राह्मणार्षेयच्छन्दोदैवतविद् याजनाध्यापनाभ्यां श्रेयोऽधि-गच्छति ॥३॥

One who understands the practical applications, the sage-seer, the diety and the poetic form of the mantras employed in the rituals will attain to perfection and welfare by helping in the performance of rituals and by imparting this knowledge to others.

1. ब्राह्मणं विधायकं स्तावकं च कर्मणः । The word 'brahmāṇa' in this aphorism means the prescriptions and eulogies concerning the ritual act.

2. आर्षेयं ऋषिदर्शनम् । The word is synonymous with 'ṛshi' (*Pāṇini* 4,1,122 इतश्चनिञ् इत्येवं ऋषिपदात् ढक् ।). The glossator quotes a verse :

अपत्यवदृषेरिष्टं मन्त्रदर्शनमित्यतः ।
अपत्यादप्यृषेरिष्टं खलु मन्त्रस्य दर्शनम् ॥

For the sage-seer, perceiving a mantra is as dear as sighting an offspring. Also is quoted a line from *Bṛhaddevatā* (5,58) :

ऋषिर्मन्त्रदृशां वेदपितरं मन्यते यतः ॥

The sage-seer is described as the parent of the Veda (viz. mantra); in other words, the mantra is his offspring.

3. छन्दो गायत्र्यादि । तद्योगाद्धि वेदः ।

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There are these poetic forms employed in *Ṛgveda.* The number of mantras in various forms is tabled below – (as given in *Sarvānukramaṇī)*

1.	Gāyatrī (24 aksharas)	2451
2.	Ushṇik (28 aksharas)	341
3.	Anushṭup (32 aksharas)	855
4.	Bṛhatī (36 aksharas)	181
5.	Pañkti (40 aksharas)	312
6.	Trishṭubh (44 aksharas)	4253
7.	Jagatī (48 aksharas)	1348
8.	Ati-jagati (52 aksharas)	18
9.	Śakvarī (56 aksharas)	19
10.	Atiśakvarī (60 aksharas)	9
11.	Ashṭī (64 aksharas)	6
12.	Atyashṭi (68 aksharas)	84
13.	Dhṛtī (72 aksharas)	2
14.	Atidhṛti (76 aksharas)	1
15.	Ekapadāh	6
16.	Dvipadāh	17
17.	Bārhata-pragātha	100
18.	Dvṛcha	94
19.	Kākubha-pragātha	55
20.	Mahābāhatāh	251
	Total	10,402

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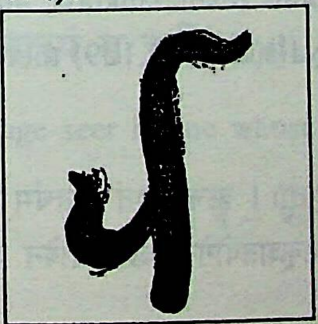
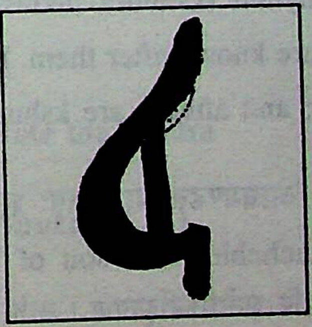
It is because of the association with these poetical forms, that Veda is distinguished from all other compositions. The first fourteen are regarded as important; the first seven more so. A large number of verses is in Trishṭup, followed by Gāyatri, and then Jagatī.

4. दैवतं इन्द्रादि । एषां विद् यथावज्ज्ञाता ॥ मन्त्राणां विहितानां पदार्थानां अनुष्ठानकाले स्मारकतया मननसाधनभूतानां विनियोज्यवेदभागानां सम्बन्धिनां ब्राह्मणादीनां ज्ञाता ॥ 'One who understands ṛshi, devatā and chhandas' (vid, jñātā) involves the understanding of the brāhmaṇa-texts which pertain to the relevant portion of the Veda (viz. the particular mantras employed in the ritual act). It refers to the mental processes of reflecting on the details of the mantra while engaged in the actual performance of the ritual acts.

5. श्रेयः प्रशस्यतरम् । ईयसुनि प्रशस्यस्य श्र इति । Śreyas is abiding welfare, the great good. It may be rewards which are transactional like food and children, or transcendental like liberation (अन्नपुत्रादिमोक्षान्तम् फलम् ।). The expression अधिगच्छति means attains excessively (आधिक्येन गच्छति लभते ।).





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- II -

(4) अथ ऋषयः ॥१॥

Then, the sage-seers are taken up for general consideration (सामान्येन प्रस्तूयन्ते ।)

(5) शतर्चिन आद्ये मण्डलेऽन्त्ये क्षुद्रसूक्तमहासूक्ता मध्यमेषु मध्यमाः ॥२॥

Among the sage-seers, three groups are recognized, there are 'śatarchins' (responsible for hundred or more mantras) in the first book (maṇḍala) of Ṛgveda consisting of 191 sūktas and 2006 mantras: Madhuchchandas and others.

Then there are the 'madhyamas' (responsible for the mantras in the books second to nine, 43 sūktas and 429 mantras). These sage-seers are called 'pragāthas'. Here, from the second book till the end of seventh, the sage-seers appear in families, hence called vamśīya-maṇḍalas) : Gṛtsamada, Viśvāmitra, Vāmadeva, Atri, Bhāradvāja and Vasishṭha.

In the last book of *Ṛgveda,* which is miscellaneous in nature, there are short hymns (kshudra-sūktas) and long hymns (mahā-sūktas); and the sage-seers are known after them. Before Nāsadīya-sūkta (10,129) there are mahā-sūktas; and after it are kshudra-sūktas.

1. आद्यमण्डलस्था ऋषयः शतर्चिन इति संज्ञिताः। ऋचां शतं शतर्चम्।...आद्यस्यर्षेः (Madhuchchhandas, son of Viśvāmitra) ऋक्शतयोगेन च्छत्रिन्यायेन शतर्चिनः सर्वे। द्व्यधिकेऽपि शतोक्तिर्बाहुल्यात्। उक्तं हि –

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शतर्चिसंज्ञा विज्ञेया ह्याद्यमण्डलदर्शिनः ।
ददर्शादौ मधुच्छन्दा ह्यधिकं यदृचां शतम् ॥
तत्साहचर्यादन्येऽपि विज्ञेयास्तु शतर्चिनः ।
अच्छत्राश्छत्रिणैकेन यथा वै छत्रिणोऽभवन् ॥

अन्त्ये (in the tenth maṇḍala) क्षुद्रसूक्तमहासूक्ताः । नासदासीत् पूर्वं महासूक्तं परं क्षुद्रसूक्तम् । सूक्तदर्शित्वादन्त्ये दशमे मण्डले स्थिता ऋषयः क्षुद्रसूक्तमहासूक्तनामानः ।

मध्यमेषु मध्यमाः । द्वितीयादि नवमान्तेषु मध्यमेषु मण्डलेषु स्थिता मध्यमनामान ऋषयः ।

There are in all about 300 sage-seers mentioned in *Ṛgveda-samhitā*.

(6) क्वचित् कदाचिदविशेषितं ब्रह्मर्षिमस्त्रियं अनुक्तगोत्रं आङ्गिरसं विद्यात् ॥३॥

This is a paribhāshā, a sort of rule. A sage-seer is generally indicated by his personal name along with his descent (gotra). He is known as the son of so and so (father or mother). When, however, the personal name alone is given in the Ṛshyanukramaṇī, the sage-seer must be presumed to belong to the Āṅgiras lineage.

(7) यस्य वाक्यं स ऋषिः ॥४॥

The sage-seer is one whose words constitute the mantra

उक्तं च – ऋषिर्दर्शनादिति ॥ *(Nirukta,* 2,11)

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- III -

(8) या तेनोच्यते सा देवता ॥१॥

Whoever is described (eulogized, referred to) by the words of the mantra is the deity (deva or devatā); the subject-matter of the mantra.

तेन वाक्येन यत् प्रतिपाद्यं वस्तु सा देवता ॥

- IV -

(9) यदक्षरपरिमाणं तच्छन्दः ॥१॥

The poetic form of the mantra (chhandas) is recognized by the number of letters in the mantra.

- V -

Now the relation between the sage-seer, the deity and the poetic form of the mantra is explained.

(10) अर्थेप्सवः ऋषयो देवताश्छन्दोभिरभ्यधावन् ॥१॥

The sage-seers desirous of an objective, employed the poetic form in their utterances, and went after the deities

1. अर्थ्यत इत्यर्थः । फलं अन्नपुत्रादिमोक्षान्तम् । Whatever is sought, desired, longed for is the object (objective, artha). It is the reward or fruit of labour like food, offsprings and so on, to the liberation from transactional fetters.

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अर्थं आत्माधीनं कर्तुमिच्छन्तः मधुच्छन्दप्रभृतयः संवननान्ता ऋषयो देवताः सूक्त हविर्भागिनीः छन्दोभिः गायत्र्यादिभिः उपायभूतैः तद्युक्तमन्त्रैर्वा अभ्यधावन् श्रद्धयागच्छन्। अर्थस्य प्राप्तौ अयमेव उपाय इति दृढसंकल्पाः ॥

2. The sages from Madhuchchhandas (1,1,1) to Samvanana (Āṅgirasa, 10,191,1-4) desiring to take possession of what they desire, were convinced that the offering of hymns in poetic forms like Gāyatrī was the only means to please the deities and secure their favour. Employing the mantras in poetic forms, the sage-seers pursued the gods with faith.

3. यादृगिव वै देवेभ्यः करोति तादृगिवास्मै देवाः कुर्वन्ति ॥

Even as the sage-seer does to the gods, the gods do unto him in the same manner.

समाश्रितरक्षणं देवाः कुर्वन्तीति दृढबुद्धयः प्राप्तवन्त इत्यर्थः ॥

With the firm understanding that the gods would protect those who seek refuge in them.

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Now, the deities are dealt with, following Yāska *(Nirukta* 2,10).

(11) तिस्र एव देवताः क्षित्यन्तरिक्षद्युस्थाना अग्निर्वायुः सूर्य इति ॥१॥

The mantras may speak of a large number of deities. But really speaking, there are only three in number : Agni residing on earth (terrestrial

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sphere), Vāyu in the midregion (atmosphere) and Sūrya in the sky (celestial sphere).

क्षियन्ति निवसन्ति अत्रेति पृथिवी क्षितिः । Earth is where all beings reside (terrestrial sphere).

भूमिस्वर्गयोरन्तरा मध्ये अमूर्ततयानुपलम्भादन्तरा क्षान्तं इत्येवमन्तरिक्षम् । The midregion (atmosphere) is located between the earth below and the sky (celestial sphere) above. It has no visible form, and cannot be grasped.

क्रीडादानादियुक्ता नित्यतृप्ता अत्रासत इति द्यौः स्वर्गः । दिव उत् ॥

(Paṇini 6,1,127)

The gods, endowed with auspicious attributes like generosity and sportive nature, and ever content, dwell in the sky, the upper region (celestial sphere).

सूर्यो न दिवस्पातु वातो अन्तरिक्षादग्निर्नः पार्थिवेभ्यः ॥ (RV 10,158,1)

तमू अकृण्वन् त्रेधा भुवे कम् ॥ (10,88,10)

एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्त्यग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः ॥ (1,164,46)

इति लिङ्गात् तिस्र एव देवताः ॥

cf. *Bṛhaddevatā* 1,69 :

अग्निरस्मिन्नथेन्द्रस्तु मध्यतो वायुरेव च ।
सूर्यो दिवीति विज्ञेयास्तिस्र एवेह देवताः ॥

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The deity of the midregion is Vāyu or alternately Indra.

Nirukta 7,6 तिस्र एव देवता इति नैरुक्ताः। अग्निः पृथिवीस्थानः। वायुर्वेन्द्रो वान्तरिक्षस्थानः। सूर्यो द्युस्थानः॥ तासां माहाभाग्यादेकैकस्या अपि बहूनि नामधेयानि भवन्ति। अपि वा कर्मपृथक्त्वात्। यथा होताध्वर्युर्ब्रह्मोद्गातेत्यपि एकस्य सतः॥ अपि पृथगेव स्युः। पृथग्घि स्तुतयो भवन्ति। यथो एतत्कर्मपृथक्त्वादिति बहवोऽपि विभज्य कर्माणि कुर्युः॥

This is an important passage. The Nāiruktas speak of three divinities as fundamental, Agni in the terrestrial sphere, Indra or Vāyu in the atmospheric region, and Sūrya in the celestial sphere. But each one of them is known to have many names, owing to the different functions they discharge. Yāska gives the analogy of one priest (ṛtvik) being called a hotṛ (sacrificer), adhvaryu (director of sacrifices), brahmā (proficient in the sacred lorē) or udgātṛ (chanter). These different appellations are due only to the different actions they perform, but do not make a difference in each of them being a priest fundamentally. Even if they are regarded as different, it is only a natural or chosen responsibility that makes them different. The illustration is given of many human beings working efficiently when they divide the duties and responsibilities among themselves.

(12) एवं व्याहृतयः प्रोक्ता व्यस्ताः ॥२॥

The three gods Agni, Vāyu and Sūrya correspond with the three sacred utterances called Vyāhṛtis, 'bhūh' (earth), 'bhuvah' (midregion) 'buvah' (sky, individually.

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देवता इत्येवमुक्तक्रमादुक्तदेवतासम्बन्धिन्य प्रोक्ताः ।

(13) समस्तानां प्रजापतिः ॥३॥

Prajāpati is the deity (देवता इति शेषः ॥) collectively (of all the deities). This deity is also called Ka (ādhyātmika). (cf. *Bṛhaddevatā* 2,123-124).

अथ व्यस्तं समस्तं वा श्रुणु व्याहृतिदैवतं ।
व्याहृतीनां समस्तानां दैवतं तु प्रजापतिः ।
व्यस्तानामयमग्निश्च वायुः सूर्यश्च देवताः ॥

(14) ओंकारः सर्वदेवत्यः पारमेष्ठ्यो वा ब्राह्मो दैव आध्यात्मिकः ॥४॥

'Om' is the sound that can be employed equally appropriately with regard to all the deities. It can also represent the highest deity (the deity that dwells in the most exalted realm). It also symbolizes Brahman, the Supreme spirit. And it signifies in (self). Prajāpati (ka, the self inhabiting the body). It is the symbol of gods in general.

1. ओमिति शब्दः सर्वदेवतास्वभिधायकत्वेन भवः सर्वदेवत्यः । (देवतान्तात् तादर्थ्ये यत् । *Pāṇini* 5,4,24).
2. पारमेष्ठ्यो वा । ओंकारः परमेष्ठिनं वाभिधत्ते । परम उत्कृष्टतमे स्थाने तिष्ठतीति परमेष्ठी । परमेष्ठिनि स्थीयते इति तत्सम्बन्धाभिधाने कर्मणि ष्यञ् । *(Pāṇini* 5,1,124). The word literally means the god who stays at the top; at the head of all the gods. It means the supreme deity, often used with reference to Agnī, Brahma, Prajāpati or paramam padam of Vishṇu.

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3. ब्राह्मः । बेत्येव । ब्रह्मदेवत्यो वा ओंकारः । (Brahmā from बृही वृद्धौ meaning all-pervasive all-originating spirit)

4. देवदेवत्यो वोंकारः (the gods in general). The word 'deva' is derived from the root meaning light, illumination (द्योतनार्थदीव्यतिधातुनिमित्तः; दीव्यतीति देवः); it means the god or deity that is illumined by the mantra (मन्त्रेण द्योत्यत इत्यर्थः ।). It is the mantra that makes us become aware of the deva (cf. *Taittirīya-brāhmaṇa,* 2,2,9,9)

5. आध्यात्मिकः । शरीरवर्तिप्रत्यगात्मप्रधानो वा ओंकारः । The expression 'ādhyātmika' indicates the self (ātman) which dwells in the body (also called ātmā; śārīra). As *Bṛhaddevatā* (1,65) observes :

तिष्ठत्येव हि भूतानां जठरे जठरे ज्वलन् ।
त्रिस्थानं चैनमर्चन्ति होत्रायां वृक्तबर्हिषः ॥

(cf. *Bṛhaddevatā,* 2,125)

वागदेवत्योऽथ वाप्यैन्द्रो यदि वा परमेष्ठिनः ।
ओंकारो वैश्वदेवो वा ब्राह्मो दैवः क एव वा ॥

Omkāra is the divinity of all speech, it refers to Indra, to Parameshṭhi, to all-the-gods, to Brahman or to the god in general. It may be noted that Kātyāyana omits vāk, Indra and Vaiśvadeva here).

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(15) तत्तत्स्थाना अन्यदेवतास्तद्विभूतयः ॥१४॥

The three deities enumerated above (Agni on earth, Vāyu in the midregion, Sūrya in the sky) abide in their own respective realms. The extraordinary manifestations of each one of these deities are the several deities pertaining to the respective realm.

1. The glossator draws attention to what is said on the subject in *Bṛhaddevatā* and in the Devatā-kāṇḍa of Yāska's *Nirukta*. He mentions that the extraordinary aspects or powerful manifestations (vibhūti) of Agni on earth, for instance, are so many modifications of Agni

अग्न्यादीनां विभूतयो विकृतय इत्यर्थः ॥

Vibhūti signifies plenty and power, might and manifestation.

(16) कर्मपृथक्त्वाद्धि पृथगभिधानस्तुतयो भवन्ति ॥१५॥

The three deities assume various forms in accordance with the various functions they discharge, and are known by various names. All the deity-forms and deity-names are in reality the forms and names of these three deities only. And this is well-known (hi)

1. हीति प्रसिद्धौ ।

2. वृत्रवधसमाश्रित रक्षण-वर्षण-दहन-पचन-द्योतनादि व्यापारभेदात् पृथग्-नामानः पृथक्स्तुतयो बहुरूपाश्च ता एव तिस्रो देवता भवन्ति ।

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(cf. *Bṛhaddevatā,* 1,27

सर्वाण्यैतानि नामानि कर्मतस्त्वाह शौनकः ।
आशी रूपं च वाच्यं च सर्वं भवति कर्मतः ॥

तथाहि –

नामानि ते शतक्रतो विश्वाभिर्गीर्भिरीमहे ॥ (RV 3,37,3)
इन्द्रो मायाभिः पुरुरूप ईयते । (3,47,15)
न हि नु ते महिमनः समस्य ॥ (6,27,3)
न ते महित्वमन्वश्नुवन्ति ॥ (7,99,1)
भुवनस्य पितरं गीर्भिराभिः ॥ (6,49,10)
आरय जानन्तो नाम चिद्विवक्तन ॥ (1,156,3)
यस्येमे हिमवन्तो महित्वा ॥ (10,121,4)
सहस्राणि सहस्रशो ये रुद्रा अधि भूम्याम् ॥ (Mādhyandinī-samhitā, 16,53-54)

इत्यादि श्रुतिशतेभ्यः ॥

The Ṛgvedic mantras cited above emphasize the supreme power of Godhead to manifest in manifold forms.

3. अभिधानं नाम गुणावच्छिन्नम् । गुणसंकीर्तनं स्तुतिः ॥

(17) एकैव वा महानात्मा देवता ॥१६॥

Or, there are not indeed three deities. There is but one deity – the great self of all the deities. His Vedic name is "great glory" (mahad-yaśa).

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1. एका वा देवता न तिस्रः। तस्या नाम महान् आत्मा इति च। श्रूयते हि

तस्य नाम महद्यशः। *(Taittirīya-āraṇyaka,* 10,1,2)

आत्मा वा इदमेक एवाग्र आसीदिति च। *(Aitareya-āraṇyaka,* 2,4,1)

(cf. *Nirukta* 7,4 महाभाग्योद्देवताया। एक आत्मा बहुधा स्तूयते। एकस्यैवात्मनोऽन्ये देवाः प्रत्यङ्गानि भवन्ति ॥)

2. The word 'ātman' (self, soul, spirit) is explained :

अर्तेरदेरतेर्वापि व्याप्नोतेरमते रमेः।
आङ्दाञ् माभ्योऽपि बहुधा त्वात्मानं
निगदेद् बुधः ॥

ऋ गतौ। *(Dhātupāṭha,* 3,16), "to move";
अद भक्षणे। (*ibid.,* 2,1), "to eat", "to consume";
अत सातत्यगमने। *(ibid.,* 1,38), "to persist", "to be uninterrupted and everlasting", "to be unchanging";
आप्लृ व्याप्तौ। *(ibid.,* 5,14), "to pervade";
अम गत्यादिषु। *(ibid.,* 1,493), "to be aware of", "to go" (gatyarthaka also has jñānārtha);
रमु क्रीडायाम्। *(ibid.,* 1,909), "to sport";
आङ् युक्तदाञ् डुदाञ् दाने। *(ibid.,* 3,9), "to gift", "to bestow";
मेङ् प्रणिदाने। *(ibid.,* 1,942), "to cause existence", "to be the source";
माङ् माने। *(ibid.,* 3,6), "to conceive", "to reflect", "purpose", "design";

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मा माने । *(ibid.,* 2,53), "to adore".

इत्येतेभ्यो धातुभ्यो मनिनादि निर्ब्रूयात् । आत्मशब्दस्तु सर्वधात्वर्थसमवायः ॥

There are ten root-meanings for the word 'ātman', given above. All the meanings should coalesce, when we consider the significanc of the word 'ātman' referring to the supreme reality at the cosmic as well as the individual context. There are also derivations of the word from 'an' ("to breathe"), 'at' ("to move"), 'tman' or vā ("to blow") and so on. The emphasis is on the living principle on the individual soul or self (reflexive pronoun). There is an individual self for each of the deities, distinguished by his name (nāma), form (rūpa), and function (karma). But the one self which sustains all these individual selves is indicated by the word 'mahān ātmā' (the great self), 'mah' signifying "mighty", "great", "strong", "abundant". The root (magh) also has the sense of manifesting, magnifying, bursting out.

(18) स सूर्य इत्याचक्षते ॥१७॥

Who is that one great self ? It is Sūrya, so it is said.

1. कः स एक इत्याह । उक्तत्रिकात्मकः सूर्यो यः स एक इति वेदविदो वदन्ति । Sūrya is the one self incorporating in himself the three deities mentioned above. So the knowers of the Veda tell us.

2. एतं ह्येव बह्वृचा महत्युक्थे मीमांसन्त इत्यारण्यकश्रुतेः । *(Aitareya-āraṇyaka,* 3,2,3).

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Sūrya, who signifies generation, proliferation (from shūṅg), protection and preservation, is the visible god of light (sūrya in the Veda). Although he is said to be the god of the sky (dyusthāna) or the heavenly realm, as distinguished from Agni on the earth and Vāyu in the mid-region, he is in fact the principle of divinity inhering in both Agni and Vāyu. Angi is the Sūrya on earth, and Vāyu is the Sūrya in the midregion. He incorporates thus all three divinities. He is 'samasta' while the three are 'vyasta'.

(19) स हि सर्वभूतात्मा ॥१८॥

He is indeed the self of all beings

1. स सूर्यः सर्व इति ऐतरेयकाः पठन्ति प्रमाणत्वेन ॥ on the authority of Aitareya-śruti, that Sūrya is all, the aphorism justifies the notion of Sūrya being the supreme and ultimate spirit.

Bṛhad-devatā, 1,61-63 :

भवद्भूतस्य भव्यस्य जङ्गमस्थावरस्य च ।
अस्यैके सूर्यमेवैकं प्रभवं प्रलयं विदुः ॥
असतश्च सतश्चैव योनिरेषा प्रजापतिः ।
यदक्षरं च वाच्यं च यथैतद् ब्रह्म शाश्वतम् ॥
कृत्वैष हि त्रिधात्मानमेषु लोकेषु तिष्ठति ।
देवान्यथायथं सर्वान्निवेश्य स्वेषु रश्मिषु ॥

All the gods are incorporated in the rays of the Sun, in their proper places and discharging their appropriate functions. The Sun indeed is the

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source and destiny of all the worlds and of all the beings. He is the origin of all that is and all that has disappeared or all that has not yet appeared. He is responsible for the past, the present and the future, for movement and for immobility. He divides himself into three aspects and abides in the worlds (as Agni on earth, as Indra or Vāyu in the midregion, and as Sūrya in the sky), providing placement for the various gods in his own rays.

He is here identified with Prajāpati and Brahma.

(20) तदुक्तमृषिणा सूर्य आत्मा जगतस्तस्थुषश्चेति ॥१९॥

The sage-seer (Kutsa) has said that Sūrya is the self of all that moves and all that is stationary (RV. 1,115,1).

१. ऋषिणा कुत्सेन मन्त्रेण वा तदर्थरूपमुक्तं प्रतिपादितम् । The mantra referred to is this (Kutsa-Āṅgirasa is the ṛshi, Sūrya the devatā and Trishṭup the chhandas)

२. पुराणे च –

दिव्यं ज्योतिः सलिलपवनैः पूरयित्वा त्रिलोकीम्
एकीभूतं पुनरपि च तत्सारमादाय गोभिः ।
अन्तर्लीनो विशसि वसुधां तद्गतः स्तूयसेऽन्नम्
तच्च प्राणस्त्वमसि जगतां प्राणभृत्सूर्य आत्मा ॥

The glossator quotes a purāṇa and justifies that the Sun, who fills the three worlds with light, water and wind, and is the very life-principle (prāṇa); it supports life in the world and is therefore the 'self' of the world.

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३. जगतो जङ्गमस्य । तस्थुषः स्थावरस्य ॥ The world consisting of beings that move and things that do not.

(21) तद्विभूतयोऽन्या देवताः ॥२०॥

The other deities (Agni, Vāyu and others) are all extraordinary manifestations of this one Sūrya.

देवताकाण्डत्रयवर्तिन्यः सूर्यव्यतिरिक्ता अग्निवायवाद्याः तद्विभूतयः । तस्य सूर्यस्य विभूतय इत्यर्थः ॥ The reference is to the gods mentioned in Yāska's *Nirukta* (Devatā-kāṇḍa). All the gods of the three realms are contained in the rays of Sūrya, as *Bṛhaddevatā* (1,63) points out :

कृत्वैष हि त्रिधात्मानं एषु लोकेषु तिष्ठति ।
देवान्यथायथं सर्वान् निवेश्य स्वेषु रश्मिषु ॥

It is in this sense that the gods are extraordinary manifestations of the one great spirit Sūrya.

(22) तदप्येतद् ऋचोक्तम् ॥२१॥

Even this has been indicated by the mantra (RV 1,164,46)

इन्द्रं मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहुरिति ॥

The mantra referred to is this (Dīrghatamā-Auchathya is the ṛshi and Samvatsara-Kālachakram the devatā and Trishṭup the chhandas)

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इन्द्रं मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहुरथो
दिव्यः स सुपर्णो गरुत्मान्।
एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्त्यग्निं
यमं मातरिश्वानामाहुः ॥

(23) यथाभिधानं स्वनुक्रमिष्यामः ॥२२॥

However, we will here follow the nomenclatures of the deities (as indicated by the sage-seers), and regard them as deities in their own right (and not as aspects of one Sūrya or of the three deities Agni, Vāyu and Sūrya).

नैकेन सूर्यशब्देन न त्रिभिरग्न्वायुसूर्यैर्न पर्यायैः। किन्तु अभिधानमुपदेशं मन्त्रद्रष्टॄणां अनतिक्रमेण अनुक्रमिष्यामः ॥

(24) प्रायेणैन्द्रे मरुतः ॥२३॥

Usually (often), in the mantras pertaining to Indra, the Maruts are implied

ऐन्द्रसूक्ते मरुतः प्रायेण बाहुल्येन निपातभाजो भवन्ति। ऐन्द्रे तु प्रायेणानैन्द्रे त्वल्पशः इति प्रायशब्दार्थः। निपातो ह्यभ्यागतपूजनं इत्यनुक्रमणीविदः ॥

(cf. *Sarvānukramaṇī,* 16,16)

When one deity is being eulogized, some other deities may also be mentioned in passing, and this is called 'nipāta'. Their mention may be due to their belonging to the same realm (earth, midregion or sky), or because of their association with the main deity who is eulogized. Here, when the

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mantras are addressed to Indra, more often than not, the Marats are also mentioned.

(cf. *Bṛhaddevatā,* 1,18-19)

देवतानामधेयानि मन्त्रेषु त्रिविधानि तु।
सूक्तभाञ्ज्यथवर्गाञ्जि तथा नैपातिकानि तु॥
सूक्तभाञ्जि भजन्ते वै सूक्तात्यृग्भाञ्जि वै ऋचः।
मन्त्रेऽन्यदैवतेऽन्यानि निगद्यन्तेऽत्र कानिचित्।
सालोक्यात्साहचर्याद्वा तानि नैपातिकानि तु॥

(25) राज्ञां च दानस्तुतयः ॥२४॥

The mantras described as 'dāna-stutis' (eulogies of charity) pertain to the kings.

दानस्तुतिं प्रति सम्बन्धिनो राजानः। चकारोऽवधारणे॥

We may also add here another rule (paribhāshā) given later (12,5).

(26) अनादेशे त्विन्द्रो देवता॥ (१२,५)

When no deity is expressly indicated in the mantra, it must be presumed that Indra is the deity of that mantra

देवानामनुक्तौ तु ज्ञेय इन्द्रो देवता। तुशब्दोऽवधारणे॥

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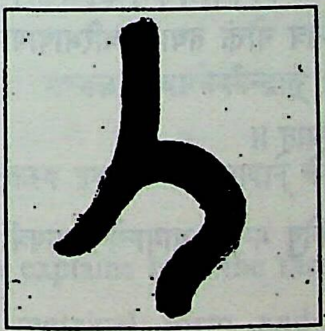
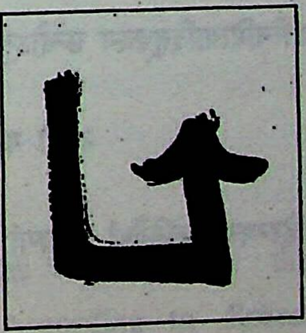
NOTE

1. Whatever is not said in the sūtra must be known by the paribhāshā (सूत्रेष्वनुक्तं परिभाषतो ग्रहीतव्यम् ॥)
2. In this science, nine details must universally be kept in mind (अत्र शास्त्रे सर्वत्र नवार्था ज्ञातव्याः ॥)
    1. सूक्तादिः । The commencement of the hymn, the first word (pratīka).
    2. सूक्तेष्वृक्संख्या । The number of stanzas in the hymn.
    3. छन्दः । The metrical form.
    4. पादः । The lines (quarter) in the metrical form.
    5. अक्षराणि । The number of letters (phonemes) in the stanza.
    6. दैवतम् । The deity addressed or referred to in the stanza or hymn.
    7. ऋषेर्नाम । The name of the sage-seer of the hymn.
    8. गोत्रं । The lineage of the sage-seer.
    9. कचित् कथा ॥ Sometimes the background story.

* * * *





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SĀYAṆA'S PREFACE TO FIRST SŪKTA

(१)

एतच्चाग्निमित्यादि नवर्चम्। अग्निं नव मधुच्छन्दा वैश्वामित्रः इति अनुक्रमणिकायां उक्तत्वात् विश्वामित्रपुत्रो मधुच्छन्दोनामकस्य सूक्तस्य द्रष्टृत्वात् तदीय ऋषिः ॥

ऋष गताविति धातुः। सर्वधातुभ्यः इन् (उणादि ४,११७)। इगुपधात् कित् (तत्रैव ४,११९) वेदप्राप्त्यर्थं तपोऽनुतिष्ठतः पुरुषान् स्वयम्भूर्देवपुरुषः प्राप्नोत्। तथा च श्रूयते –

अजान्ह वै पृश्नींस्तपस्यमानान् ब्रह्म स्वयंभ्वभ्यानर्ष-
त्तदृषयोऽभवन् तदृषीणामृषित्वम् ॥ (तैत्तिरीयारण्यके २,९)

इति। तथातीन्द्रियस्य वेदस्य परमेश्वरानुग्रहेण प्रथमतो दर्शनाद् ऋषित्वं इति अभिप्रेत्य स्मर्यते।

युगान्तेऽन्तर्हितान् वेदान् सेतिहासान्महर्षयः।
लेभिरे तपसा पूर्वमनुज्ञाताः स्वयम्भुवेति ॥

(२)

अग्निमित्यादिसूक्तस्य छन्दोऽनुक्रमणिकायां यद्यप्यत्र नोक्तं तथापि परिभाषायामेवमुक्तम्।

आदौ गायत्रं प्राग्घिरण्यस्तूपात् ॥

इति। हिरण्यस्तूपऋषिर्येषां मन्त्राणां वक्ष्यते ततः प्राचीनेषु मन्त्रेषु सामान्येन गायत्रं छन्द इत्यर्थः ॥

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पुरुषस्य पापसम्बन्धं वारयितुं आच्छादकत्वाच्छन्द इत्युच्यते। छादयन्ति ह वा एनं छन्दांसि पापात्कर्मण इति। अथ वा चीयमानाग्निसन्तापस्य आच्छादकत्वाच्छन्दः। तच्च तैत्तिरीया आमनन्ति (संहितायां ५,६,६,१)

प्रजापतिरग्निमचिनुत। स क्षुरपविर्भूत्वाऽतिष्ठत्। तं देवा बिभ्यतो
नोपायन्ते। छन्दोभिरात्मानं छादयित्वोपायन्तच्छन्दसां छन्दस्त्वम्॥

यद्वा। अपमृत्युं वारयितुमाच्छादयतीति छन्दः। तदपि छान्दोग्योपनिषदि (१,४,२) आम्नातं –

देवा वै मृत्योर्बिभ्यतस्त्रयीं विद्यां प्राविशंस्ते छन्दोभिरात्मान-
माच्छादयन् यदेभिरच्छादयंस्तच्छन्दसां छन्दस्त्वम्॥

इति॥

(३)

तथा द्योतनार्थदीव्यति धातुनिमित्तो देवशब्द इत्येतदाम्नायते। दिवा वै नोऽभूदिति तद्देवानां देवत्वमिति (तैत्तिरीय ब्राह्मणे २,२,९,९)। अतो दीव्यतीति देवः। मन्त्रेण द्योत्यत इत्यर्थः।

अस्मिन्सूक्ते स्तूयमानत्वादग्निर्देवः॥

तथा चानुक्रमणिकायामुक्तम् (१२,१२) –

मण्डलादिष्वाग्नेयमैन्द्रात्॥

इति। तस्य सूक्तस्य प्रथमां ऋचं भगवान् वेदपुरुष आह॥

Sāyaṇa explains here the three details of the Vedic mantras : the sage-seer, the metrical form and the deity. According to *Bṛhaddevatā*

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(cf. 137-138), the sage-seers desirous of an accomplishment pursued the deities through the metrical forms (mantras); it is therefore the metrical forms are to be mentioned before the deity and after the sage-seer :

अर्थेप्सवः खल्वृषयश्छन्दोभिर्देवताः पुरा ।
अभ्यधावन्निति छन्दो मध्ये प्राहुर्महर्षयः ॥
ऋषिं तु प्रथमं ब्रूयाच्छन्दस्तु तदनन्तरम् ।
देवतामथ मन्त्राणां कर्मस्वेवमिति श्रुतिः ॥

(1)

The sage-seer of this hymn is Madhuchchhandas, son of Viśvāmitra. The sage-seer is called a 'ṛshi' (from the root ऋ or ऋष meaning "to go") for the following reason, according to *Taittirīya-āraṇyaka :* At the beginning of the aeon, the sages were created. As they were not born like common human beings, they were called the "unborn ones" (aja). They, the pure ones, performed penances. And the self-manifest Lord appeared in front of them (viz. went to them, ṛi or ṛsh gatau). Because the Brahman went to them, they were called ṛshis. They perceived the Veda (which cannot be apprehended by any other means) for the first time, and became ṛshis (darśanāt). The Veda gets merged with the creator at the end of the aeon, and at the beginning of the subsequent aeon, the sage-seers perform penances and by the grace of the Lord, obtain the Veda along with historical or mythical narratives (itihāsa) and reveal it to mankind. This is how the sage-seers are known as ṛshis.

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It may also be noted that the meaning of "movement", "going" (gatyartha) of the root ऋ or ऋष् also implies the sense of "knowing", "understanding" (jñānārtha) (गत्यर्थकधातूनां ज्ञानार्थत्वात्) The root thus provides the meaning of "knower" for the word 'ṛshi' (darśanāt).

(2)

The chhandas or metrical form which the mantra assumes is then taken up for consideration. Sāyaṇa notes that according to *Anukramaṇi* (आदौ गायत्रं प्रग्घिरण्यस्तूपात् । १३-१४), Gāyatri is the metre that is more ancient than the metrical forms adopted by the sage-seer, Hiraṇyastūpa. No explanation, however, is forthcoming as to what forms are indicated when Hiraṇyastūpa is mentioned. This reference appears altogether unilluminating. Sāyaṇa takes the word chhandas in the sense of hiding, concealing, covering (chhādanāt) : it covers the man away from all evil influences (pāpa-sambandham vārayitum). He cites an ancedote from *Taittirīya-samhitā* (5,6,6,1). In the distant past, the creator Prajāpati performed the fire-ritual (agni-chayana). As a result, Agṇi stood in front of him like a sharp and flaming sword. Then all the gods became terrified, and were too scared to go near Agni. It was then that they employed a strategy. They hid themselves by metrical mantras (chhandas) and approached Agni. This is the concealing character of chhandas.

Sāyaṇa also quotes from *Chhāndoqya-upanishad* (1,4,2) to the effect that chhandas is so called because it averts untimely death. The gods were

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frightened by death, and concealed themselves in the three-fold Vedic lore (trayīm vidyām) entering into it. The Vedic lore which is in the form of chhandas hid them and protected them from death.

(3)

Sāyaṇa then takes up 'god' or 'deity' for consideration. The word 'deva' (or devatā) is derived from a root which has the sense of light, illumination (dyotanārtha). The gods are those who shine. They shine by their own light (cf. *Taittirīya-brāhmaṇa,* 2,2,9,9). It is the mantras that manifest the deities (mantreṇa dyotyate).

In the present hymn, Agni is the deity. Sāyaṇa also observes that in each of the books of Ṛgveda (maṇḍala), Agni is first eulogized or Indra *(Anukramaṇī* 12,12, मण्डलादिष्वाग्नेयमैन्द्रात् ।). We may provide the following additional information. It is usual for a sage-seer to eulogize Agni first and then Indra :

Maṇḍala I begins with ten hymns to Agni (by Madhuchhandas), and proceeds with Vāyu, Indra-and-Vāyu, Indra and then reverting to Agni.

Maṇḍala II begins with hymns to Agni (by Gṛtsamada) and follows with hymns to Indra. The third Maṇḍala likewise opens with hymns to Agni of Viśvāmitra the Gāthin. Indra comes later as the deity. The next Maṇḍala starts with hymns to Agni by Vāmadeva-Gotama and follows with the 26th hymn to Indra (Ātmā). Maṇḍala V opens with hymns to Agni by Budha and

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Gavishṭhara, both offsprings of Atri and hymns to Indra follow. The sixth Maṇḍala has the opening hymns to Agni by Bhāradvāja, son of Bṛhaspati, hymns to Indra following. The next Maṇḍala has the first seventeen hymns to Agni, and the subsequent hymns are to Indra. The eighth Maṇḍala, however begins with hymns to Indra (by Pragātha Ghaura Kāṇva), hymns to Agni coming later. The entire ninth Maṇḍala is devoted to the deity Pavamāna-soma, the first hymn being ascribed to Madhuchchhandas, son of Viśvāmitra. The last Maṇḍala begins again with hymns to Agni (by Trita). There seems to be this general and more usual pattern : hymns to Agni mark the commencement, and are followed by hymns to Indra. Agni and Indra thus constitute the chief devatās of *Ṛgveda-samhitā.*

PRELIMINARY DETAILS

1. Śaunaka's *Bṛhaddevatā* 2, 126

आग्नेयं प्रथमं सूक्तं मधुच्छन्दस आर्षकम् ॥

The sūkta, first among the sūktas addressed to Agni, is described here as Āgneya. A sūkta or hymn is a complete statement. It may consist of one, few, several or numerous stanzas (ṛchas). But they are all focussed on one single idea; they together constitute one vision (darśana). (cf. अर्थैकत्वादेकं वाक्यं Jaimini 2,1,46). This sūkta has nine stanzas. The sage-seer of this hymn is Madhuchchhandas of the family of Viśvāmitra. He is celebrated as a śatarchin or one who is responsible for a hundred or more stanzas (ṛchas). The Maṇḍala of *Ṛgveda* has the sage-seers who are described as śatarchins.

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2. Kātyāyana's *Sarvānukramaṇī, (1,1)*

अथाग्निमीळ इत्यादि ।
अग्निं नव मधुच्छन्दा वैश्वामित्रः ॥

(i) अग्निं इति सूक्तादिः । ईळे पुरोहितं । The hymn begins with the word 'agni' (pratīka).

(ii) नवेति सूक्तस्य ऋक्संख्या । Nine is the number of stanzas in the hymn.

(iii) मधुच्छन्दा इति ऋषेर्नाम । Madhuchchhandas is the name of the sage-seer of the hymn.

(iv) वैश्वामित्र इति तस्य गोत्रम् । He was the offspring of Viśvāmitra (lineage).

(v) आदौ गायत्रं प्राग्घैरण्यस्तूपीयादिति गायत्री छन्दः । Gāyatrī is the metrical form.

(vi) मण्डलादिष्वाग्नेयमैन्द्रादित्यग्निर्देवता । सुरूपकृत्नु, दशैन्द्र इत्यतः प्राक् ॥ Agni is the deity invoked in all the stanzas of the hymn.

3. Rāghavendra-tīrtha's *Mantrārtha-mañjari* (upodghāta)

आद्यमाग्नेयं सूक्तं नवर्चं वर्गद्वयात्मकम् गायत्रीछन्दस्कं अग्निदेवताकं
तदन्तर्गत-तन्नामक-विष्णुदेवताकं च ॥

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FIRST HYMN TO AGNI

(FIRST BOOK)

अथ प्रथमं मण्डलम् । प्रथमोऽनुवाकः ।

(प्रथमोऽष्टकः । प्रथमोऽध्यायः । वर्गौ १-२ ॥)

(१)

ऋषिः मधुच्छन्दा वैश्वामित्रः ।

छन्दः गायत्री ।

देवता अग्निः ॥

॥ हरिः ॐ ॥

1. अ॒ग्निमी॑ळे पु॒रोहि॑तं
   य॒ज्ञस्य॑ दे॒वमृ॒त्विज॑म् ।
   होता॑रं रत्न॒धात॑मम् ॥१॥

2. अ॒ग्निः पूर्वे॑भि॒र्ऋषि॑भि॒
   रीड्यो॒ नूत॑नैरु॒त ।
   स॒ देवा एह व॑क्षति ॥२॥

3. अ॒ग्निना॑ र॒यिम॑श्नव॒
   त्पोष॑मे॒व दि॒वे दि॑वे ।
   य॒शसं॑ वी॒रव॑त्तमम् ॥३॥

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4. अ॒ग्ने यं य॒ज्ञम॑ध्व॒रं
विश्वतः॑ परि॒भूरसि॑ ।
स इद्दे॒वेषु॑ गच्छति ॥४॥

5. अ॒ग्निर्होता॑ क॒विक्र॑तुः
स॒त्यश्चि॒त्रश्र॑वस्तमः ।
दे॒वो दे॒वेभि॒रा ग॑मत् ॥५॥

6. यद॒ङ्ग दा॒शुषे॒ त्वमग्ने॑
भ॒द्रं क॑रि॒ष्यसि॑ ।
तवेत्तत्स॒त्यम॑ङ्गिरः ॥

7. उप॑ त्वाग्ने दि॒वे दि॑वे॒
दोषा॑वस्तर्धि॒या व॒यम् ।
नमो॒ भर॑न्त॒ एम॑सि ॥७॥

8. राज॑न्तमध्व॒राणां॑ गो॒ –
पामृ॒तस्य॒ दीदि॑वम् ।
वर्ध॑मानं॒ स्वे दमे॑ ॥८॥

9. स नः॑ पि॒तेव॑ सू॒नवेऽग्ने॑
सूपाय॒नो भ॑व ।
सच॑स्वा नः स्व॒स्तये॑ ॥९॥

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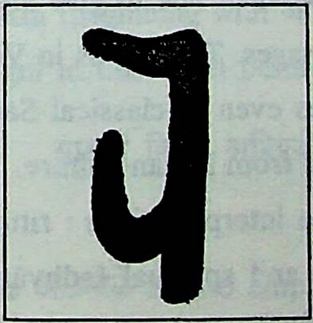
NOTE : Madhuchchhandas was the son of Viśvāmitra (who was the son of Gādhin, according to *Aitareya-brāhmaṇa* 7,17 and 18 and *Jaiminīya-brāhmaṇa* 3,237-8). He was responsible for 102 stanzas (ṛchas) in the first ten hymns of the first book. Hence he was known as Śatarchin. Viśvāmitra's hymns (62) are to be found in the third book. So the mantras of Madhuchchhandas and of his son Jetā should have more naturally found their place there. The ten stanzas of the first hymn in the ninth book, addressed to Pavamāna-Soma, are also the work of Madhuchchhandas-Vaiśvāmitra. His sons were Aghamarshaṇa-Mādhuchchhandasa (10,190) and Jeta mādhuchchhandas (1,11). According to *Pañchavimśa-brāhmaṇa,* Viśvāmitra was a king, belonging to the royal family of Jahnu. *Ṛgveda-sarvānukramaṇī* mentions that the father of Viśvāmitra, Gathin, was the son of Kuśika.



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(संहितापाठः ।)

अग्निमीळे पुरोहितं
यज्ञस्यं देवमृत्विजंम् ।
होतांरं रत्नधातंमम् ॥१॥

(पदपाठः ।)

अग्निम् । ईळे । पुरःऽहिंतम् । यज्ञस्यं । देवम् । ऋत्विजंम् । होतांरम् ।
रत्नऽधातंमम् ॥

(अन्वयः ।)

यज्ञस्य पुरोहितं देवं होतारं ऋत्विजं रत्नधातमं अग्निं ईळे ॥

It is impossible owing to more reasons than one to give an adequate or valid English translation for the Vedic passages. The words in Vedic Sanskrit do not have their perfect correspondances even in classical Sanskrit, much less in a language that is distantly removed from Indian culture. Yāska points out that the Vedic mantras admit of three interpretations : ritualistic (adhi-yajña), mythic (aitihāsika or Adhi-daiva) and spiritual (adhyātma). This is also the traditional approach (त्रयोऽर्थाः सर्ववेदेषु ।, cited from *Skānda-purāṇa* by Ānanda-tīrtha). The account that follows adopts this approach, and the word-meanings in English are given at the end of each interpretation.

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I. RITUALISTIC INTERPRETION (ADHI-YAJÑA)

There is a 'viniyoga' (application of the hymn to ritual acts) for this sūkta given in *Āśvalāyana-śrauta-sūtra* (4,13) :

तत्राग्निमीळ (1,1,1) इति सूक्तं प्रातरनुवाक आग्नेये क्रतौ विनियुक्तम् ।
अवा नो अग्न (1,79,7) इति षडग्निमीळेऽग्निं दूतम् (1,12) ॥

The hymn is required to be recited during the prātaranuvāka ritual connected with the deity Agni. 'Prātaranuvāka' is so called because the recitation is meant to take place just before dawn. The context is the Soma-yāga, where the night previous to the day fixed for the Soma-extraction (sutya) three deities (Agni, Ushas and the Aśvins) are invoked in seven metrical forms, from midnight to dawn. Each invocation is named after the deity invoked (viz. Agni-kratu, Ushah-kratu and Āśvina-kratu, the expression kratu signifying a sacrificial ritual. First to be recited on this occasion is Āgneya-sūkta (beginning with अग्निमीळे). Puronuvākyā is to invoke and invite a deity (Agni in this case) before the offerings are made (homa).

साह्वान् विश्वा अभियुजोऽग्निमीळे पुरोहितमिति संयाज्ये ॥
(स्विष्टिकृद्धोमे)

The mantra अग्निमीळे is also employed as a Yājyā formula in the svishṭi-kṛd-homa in the ritual known as Pavamāneshṭi. Yājyā is the mantra that is recited as the offerings are made for the deity (who has arrived in response to purunuvākyā).

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Puronuvākyā (देवतानुस्मरणाह्वानयोः) and the Yājyā (होमकार्ये) together constitute the viniyoga. The former makes the deity manifest (devatā-prakāśana), while the latter makes the offerings (havish-pradāna).

पुरोनुवाक्यामनूच्य याज्यया जुहोति ॥

This sūkta lends itself to a ritualistic interpretation easily, for all the words contained in it (except probably the last epithet to Agni) refer to rituals. Agni is, of course, the central figure in all Vedic rituals, big and small; and he is described here as the chief priest (purohitam), the god of the ritual (yajñasya devam), the officiating priest (ṛtvijam), and the invoking priest (hotāram). Sāyaṇa takes this lead and offers a strictly ritualistic interpretation. His relevant comments are :

अग्निनामकं देवं ईळे स्तौमि ॥

मन्त्रस्य होत्रा प्रयोज्यत्वात् अहं होता स्तौमीति लभ्यते ॥

किदृशं अग्निम् ? यज्ञस्य पुरोहितं । यथा राज्ञः पुरोहितः तदभीष्टं सम्पादयति तथाग्निरपि यज्ञस्यापेक्षितं होमं सम्पादयति ॥

यद्वा । यज्ञस्य सम्बन्धिनि पूर्वभाग आवहनीयरूपेणावस्थितम् ॥

पुनः कीदृशम् ? देवं दानादिगुणयुक्तम् ॥

पुनः कीदृशम् ? होतारं ऋत्विजम् । देवानां यज्ञेषु होतृनामक ऋत्विक् अग्निरेव । तथा च श्रूयते – 'अग्निर्वै देवानां होता' (ऐतरेय-ब्राह्मणे ३॥१४॥) इति ॥

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पुनरपि कीदृशम् ? रत्नधातमं यागफलरूपाणां रत्नानां अतिशयेन धारयितारं पोषयितारं वा ॥

According to Sāyaṇa, the prayer is uttered by the hotṛ or the deity-invoking priest, one of the four principal priests involved in any fire-ritual (others being adhvaryu or the sacrificing priest, udgātṛ or the Sāman-singing priest and the brahmā or master of ceremonies. The Veda assigned to the hotṛ is *Ṛgveda* (even as Yajurveda for the adhvaryu and Sāma-veda for the udgātṛ)

मन्त्रस्य होत्रा प्रयोज्यत्वादहं होता स्तौमीति लभ्यते ॥

And Agni is also described as hotṛ (hotāram). This priest is not only the invoking one, but also the offerer of oblations. He invokes the gods for whom oblations are meant (स देवान् एह वक्षति । 1,1,2) and carries the oblations to these gods when the offering is made in the fire.

ह्वयति धातोः देवानां आह्वातारम् । अग्नेः होतृत्वं होमादिकरणत्वेन द्रष्टव्यम् ॥

(हु – *Dhātu-pāṭha* 25,1)

Agni is the fire-god that is directly seen (pratyaksha), unlike the other gods who are not visible. Even when other gods are the devatās for the mantra, it is to Agni as the representative of all the gods that the offerings are made. Hence अग्निमुखा वै देवाः । Here Agni himself is devatā (deity) of the mantra; and he is the god of the ritual (yajñasya devam), and we need not look for of any other god as indicated or relevant here.

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देवशब्ददेवताशब्दयोः पर्यायत्वात् मन्त्रप्रतिपाद्या
काचिदग्निव्यतिरिक्ता देवता न अन्वेषणीया ॥

Agni is the 'deva' in the sense that he is the provider or inspirer of the ritual as well as the illuminer; he lights up and shines brightly.

यज्ञस्य दाता दीपयिता द्योतयिता अयं अग्निः ॥
(दीपनद्योतनयोरेकार्थत्वेऽप्यस्ति धातुभेदः ।)

The word deva also means one who dwells in the heavenly realms (dyusthāna). Agni is typically the god of the earth (pṛthivī-sthāna-devatā). But since he conveys the offerings made on earth to the gods above, he is regarded as residing in the heavenly realms also

देवानां प्रति हविर्वहनाद् द्युस्थानो भवति ॥

He is in front of the worshipper (purah+hita), and is the chief priest in the sense that he is the high priest who directs the details of the ritual. The Ṛgvedic stanza 10,98,7 (मद्देवापि शं तनवे पुरोहितः) suggests that the expression 'purohita' means what is kept in front as the most relevant

पुरः एनं दधातीति पुरोहितः ॥ (पुर एनं दधते ।)

He is also the best bestower of the most precious rewards of the ritual (यागफलरूपाणां रत्नानाम् ।).

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Sāyaṇa relies in all these details on what Yāska has written about this mantra *(Nirukta* 7,15) :

> अग्निमीळेऽग्निं याचामीरिध्येषणकर्मा पूजाकर्मा वा। पुरोहितो व्याख्यातो (ऋ. १०,९८,७) यज्ञस्य देवो दानाद्वा दीपनाद्वा द्योतनाद्वा द्युस्थानो भरतीति वा। यो देवः सा देवता। होतारं ह्वातारं जुहोतेर्होतेत्यौर्णवाभः। रत्नधातमं रमणीयानां धनानां दातृतमम्। इति ॥

The expression 'ṛtvijam' in the mantra is not referred to in the comments of Yāska. The word 'ṛtvik' is from 'ṛtu' which means any fixed point of time meant for the performance of the ritual. The priest whose responsibility is to see that the proper act is done at the proper time during the ritual is the ṛtvik; he is but the efficient priest. (cf. Pāṇini, 3,2,59 ऋतौ यजतीति ऋत्विक्।) (also ऋतं अनु यजतीति। from the sūtra 'ऋत्विग्वधृक्', Pāṇini 3,2,59 यजेःकिन्प्रत्ययो निपात्यते।)

He may be any one of the four main priests commissioned in a sacrificial ritual ('hotṛ', 'adhvaryu', 'udgātṛ' or 'brahma'). Purohita would be the master of ceremonies or brahmā, who guides and supervises all the activities in the ritual. Alternately 'purohita' may represent the 'adhvaryu', the chief sacrificing priest, who sits right in front of the sacred fire in the altar. Or, the word may go with 'hotāram', the word which immediaely follows. Even as the human 'hotṛ' invokes and invites the gods for whom the oblations are meant, Agni as 'hotṛ' will invite the other gods to come and partake of the oblations (स देवान् एह वक्षति). The two words are used together in many passages, like

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in 1,44,11 (नि त्वा यज्ञस्य साधनमग्ने होतारमृत्विजम् ।), 1,45,7 (नि त्वा होतारमृत्विजम् ।), त्वां यज्ञेषु ऋत्विजमग्ने होतारमीळते ।), 8,44,6 (मन्द्रं होतारमृत्विजम् ।)

cf. also 'यद्येयं वाक्येऽयमग्निः स होता' (बृहदारण्यके ५॥१॥३१) इति श्रुत्या होतृनियामकतया विशिष्य तत्सान्निद्धात् 'तदधीनत्वात् ।' इति प्रागुक्तन्यायेनैव होतृनामकं ऋत्विजं होतारम् ॥

Indeed, the expression 'īḷe' in the first person is taken to refer to hotṛ himself (मन्त्रस्य होत्रा प्रयोज्यत्वादहं होता स्तौमीति लभ्यते ।). The ritualistic sense of the word 'īḷe' is also emphasized by Sāyaṇa on the strength of Yāska's etymology :

ईडिति धातोः स्तुत्यर्थत्वं प्रसिद्धम् । धातूनामनेकार्थत्वमिति न्यायमाश्रित्य यञ्चाध्येषणपूजा अप्यत्रोचितत्वात् तदर्थतया व्याख्याताः ॥

Usually 'īḷe' (or īḍe) means 'I eulogize', 'I praise' (from ईड स्तुतौ । *Dhātu-pāṭha,* 24,9 स्तौमि ।). But the root has many shades of meaning : "to beg", "to long for", "to pursue", "to worship". Here, the context necessitates that the meaning of worship or sacrifice (also यज्ञ, यज् + नङ् , यज देवपूजायाम् ।) should be taken, especially as the word 'yajña' is present in the passage (यज्ञस्य देवं ।). The word yajña is formed from Pāṇini 3,3,90 (यज याच यत विच्छ प्रच्छ रक्षो नङ् । यज् + न, श्चुत्वसन्धि 'जञो योगे ज्ञः', यज्ञरूपनिष्पत्तिः ।). And it agreed with ईळे, यजामि ॥

[The form ईळे for ईडे (in singular number, first person) is explained on the basis of the Kārikā on *Prātiśākhya :*

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द्वयोश्चास्य स्वरयोर्मध्यमेत्य
सम्पद्यते स डकारो ळकारः ।
ळकारतामेति स एव चास्य
डकारः सन्नूष्मणा सम्प्रयुक्तः ॥

It is a custom among the Ṛgvedis to use this form when the letter 'ḍa' occurs between two vowels (ach)

अज्मध्यस्थडकारस्य ळकारः बह्वृचा जगुः ।
अज्मध्यस्थढकारस्य ळ्हकारं वै यथाक्रमम् ॥

* * * *

अग्निम् । The fire-god who leads the worshipper to the higher realms.

ईळे (ईडे) । I praise, adore, worship (by ritual).

पुरोहितम् । placed in front (as the chief priest of the ritual).

यज्ञस्य । of the ritual (in progress), worship.

देवम् । the god, the object of worship.

ऋत्विजम् । the sacrificing priest.

होतारम् । the priest who invokes all the gods to come and partake of the offerings.

रत्नधातमम् । the best bestower of the most precious rewards to those who are engaged in the ritual.

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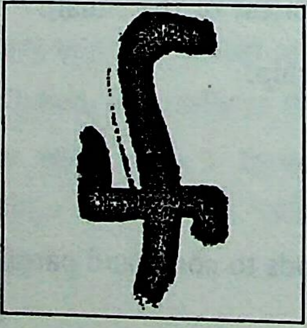
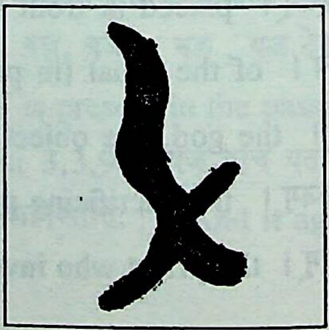
(अग्निः। अङ्गति गच्छति ऊर्ध्वं गमयति यजमानम्। from अगि गतौ।
ईळे। याचामीळिरध्येषणकर्म पूजाकर्मा वा।
पुरोहितम्। पुरः हितं। पुरः एनं दधते दधातीति।
यज्ञम्। यज देवपूजायाम्। यज् + नङ्
देवम्। दीव्यतेः कर्तरि क्रीडादिकर्तारं, कर्मणि स्तुत्यर्थात् स्तुत्यः। दानात् यज्ञस्य दाता।
ऋत्विजम्। ऋतं अनु यजतीति। ऋतौ यजतीति।
होतारम्। हु दानादानयोः दातारम्। ह्वयतीति। जुहोति इति और्णवाभः।
रत्नधातमम्। रत्नानि दधाति अतिशयेन। यागफलरूपाणां धारयितार अतिशयेन।)

* * * *





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II. INTERPRETATION BASED ON DEITIES (ADHI-DAIVA)

If the main spokesman of the ritualistic interpretation is Sāyaṇa, both Yāska *(Nirukta)* and Śaunaka *(Bṛhaddevatā)* prefer the interpretation centering round the deities (devatā), who are eulogized or referred to in the mantras. The deity for the first hymn in *Ṛgveda-samhitā* is Agni, the fire-god. He has a personality of his own, and functions that are peculiar to him. This is emphasized by Yāska and Śaunaka.

Śaunaka, in fact, begins his great work *Bṛhaddevatā* pointing out that the deity is the most important detail in a mantra :

वेदितव्यं दैवतं हि मन्त्रे मन्त्रे प्रयत्नतः ।
दैवतज्ञो हि मन्त्राणां तदर्थमवगच्छति ॥

one must try to understand precisely the deity in each of the mantras, for it is only the one who knows the deity that will understand the exact significance of the mantra.

अर्थमिच्छन्नृषिर्देवं यं यमाहायमस्त्विति ।
प्राधान्येन स्तुवन्भक्त्या मन्त्रस्तद्देव एव सः ॥ (Intro. 6)

Desiring an objective, the sage-seer indicates a god and eulogizes that god with great devotion. It must be understood that god is the deity (deva or devatā) of that mantra. In this case, Agni is the deity.

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स्तुतिस्तु नाम्ना रूपेण कर्मणा बान्धवेन च।
स्वर्गायुर्धनपुत्राद्यैरर्थैराशीस्तु कथ्यते ॥
स्तुत्याशिषौ तु यास्वृक्षु दृश्येतेऽल्पास्तु ता इह।
ताभ्यश्चाल्पतरास्ताः स्युः स्वर्गो याभिस्तु याच्यते ॥ (ibid., 7-8)

When the deity is eulogized, he may be named directly (as the present mantra mentions Agni, अग्निमीळे); or his form may be indicated; or again his actions may be recounted (purohitam, yajñasya devam, ṛtvijam, hotāram and ratnadhatamam in the present mantra). Alternately, his relations may be suggested. It is usual for the sage-seer to pray this deity to bestow on him heaven (svarga), long life, wealth or progeny.

By heaven is meant abundant happiness, not interrupted by sorrow either before or after, and in the nature of fulfilment of all longings (Sāyaṇa, Intro. to *Kāṇva-samhitā bhāshya)*

स्वर्गो नाम सुखातिशयः। तथा च
दुःखेन यन्न सम्भिन्नं न च ग्रस्तमनन्तरम्।
अभिलाषोपनीतं च सुखं स्वर्गपदाभिधम् ॥

Sāyaṇa relies on Yāska (7,14) for the traditional explanation of the deity of this hymn, Agni :

अत्राग्निशब्दस्य यास्को बहुधा निर्वचनं दर्शयति।

अथातोऽनुक्रमिष्यामोऽग्निः पृथिवीस्थानः। तं प्रथमं व्याख्यास्यामः। अग्निः कस्मात्? अग्रणीर्भवति। अग्रं यज्ञेषु प्रणीयते। अङ्गं नयति। संनममानः

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अक्नोपनो भवतीति स्थौलाष्ठीविः। न क्नोपयति स्नेहयति। त्रिभ्य आख्यातेभ्यो जायत इति शाकपूणिः इतादक्तादग्धाद्वा नीतात्स खल्वेतेरकारमादत्ते गकारमनक्तेर्वा दहतेर्वा नीः परस्तस्यैषा भवति॥ (निरुक्ते ७॥१४॥)

अग्निमीळे इति। अस्यायमर्थः। सामान्येन सर्वदेवतानां लक्षणस्य अभिहितत्वादनन्तरं यतः प्रतिपदं विशेषेण वक्तव्यत्वं आकांक्षितम्। अतो अनुक्रमेण वक्ष्यामः॥

(१) तत्र पृथिवीलोके स्थितोऽग्निः प्रथमं व्याख्यास्यते। कस्मात् प्रवृत्ति निमित्ताद् अग्निशब्देन देवता अभिधीयत इति प्रश्नस्य अग्रणीः इत्यादिकमुत्तरम्। देवसेनां अग्रे स्वयं नयतीति अग्रणीः। एतदेकं अग्निशब्दस्य प्रवृत्तिनिमित्तम्। तथा च ब्राह्मणान्तरं – अग्निर्देवानां सेनानीरिति। एतदेवाभिप्रेत्य बह्वृचा मन्त्रब्राह्मण आमनन्ति।

अग्निर्मुखं प्रथमो देवतानाम्॥

इति मन्त्रं (एतरेयब्राह्मणे १॥४॥)।

अग्निर्वै देवानामवमः॥

इति ब्राह्मणम् (एतरेय ब्राह्मणे १,१)। तथा तैत्तिरीयाश्चामनन्ति।

अग्निरग्रे प्रथमो देवतानाम्॥

इति (तैत्तिरीयब्राह्मणे २॥४॥३॥३॥)। अग्निरवमो देवतानामिति च। वाजसनेयिनस्तु एवं आमनन्ति।

स वा एषोऽग्रे देवतानामजायत तस्मादग्निर्नामेति॥

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(२) यज्ञेषु अग्निहोत्रेष्टिपशुसोमरूपेषु अग्रं पूर्वदिग्वर्ति-आहवनीय देशं प्रति गार्हपत्यात् प्रणीयत इति द्वितीयं प्रवृत्तिनिमित्तम् ॥

(३) संनममानः सम्यक् स्वयमेव प्रह्वीभवन्। अङ्गं स्वकीयं शरीरं। नयति काष्ठदाहे हविष्पाके च प्रेरयतीति तृतीयं प्रवृत्ति निमित्तम् ॥

(४) स्थूलाष्ठीवनामकस्य महर्षेः पुत्रो निरुक्तकारः कश्चित् अक्नोपन इत्यग्निशब्दं निर्वक्ति। तत्र न क्नोपयतीत्युक्ते न स्नेहयति। किन्तु काष्ठादिकं रूक्षयतीत्युक्तं भवति ॥

(५) शाकपूणिनामको निरुक्तकारः धातुत्रयादग्निशब्दनिष्पत्तिं मन्यते।

(i) इत इण् गतौ ॥ (धातुकोशः २४॥३६॥) इति धातुः।

(ii) अक्तोऽञ्जू व्यक्तिम्रक्षणकान्तिगतिषु ॥ (तत्रैव २९॥२१॥) इति धातुः।
(अथवा) दग्धो दह भस्मीकरणे ॥ (तत्रैव २३॥२२॥) इति धातुः।

(iii) नीतो णीञ् प्रापणे ॥ (तत्रैव २२॥५॥) इति धातुः।

अग्निशब्दो ह्यकारगकारनिशब्दानपेक्षमाण एतिधातोरुत्पन्नाद् अयनशब्दाद् अकारमादत्ते। अनक्तिधातुगतस्य ककारस्य गकारादेशं कृत्वा तमादत्ते। नीरिति नयतिधातुः। स च ह्रस्वो भूत्वा परोभवति। ततो धातुत्रयं मिलित्वाग्निशब्दो भवति ॥

(यज्ञभूमिं गत्वा स्वकीयमंगं नयति काष्ठदाहे हविष्पाके च प्रेरयतीति समुदायार्थः ॥ Sāyaṇa's justification for the ritualistic meaning).

Yāska, whom Sāyaṇa quotes, suggests that the word Agni, the name of the deity in this hymn, may be derived from several details *(Nirukta,* 7,14) :

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(1) He is the fore-runner or leader (agraṇī अग्रं नयतीत्यग्निः ।) Sāyaṇa sees here a reference to Agni being the leader of the host of gods, as found in the brāhmaṇa texts (अग्निर्देवानां सेनानीः ।). Sāyaṇa also cites *Aitareya-brāhmaṇa* (1,4) where Agni is said to be the head or first among gods (अग्निर्मुखं प्रथमो देवतानां ।), and *Taittirīya-brāhmaṇa* (2,4,3,3), which says that Agni is at the fore-front, as the first among gods (अग्निरग्रे प्रथमो देवतानाम् ।). He also points out that the Vājasaneyins (Śukla-yajurveda adherents) believe that Agni was the first to be born among all the gods and that he was so named on this account स वा एषोऽग्रे देवतानामजायत तस्मादग्निर्नामेति ।).

(2) He is the first to be carried.(agram praṇīyate) in the rituals (yajñeshu). Sāyaṇa explains that the ritual referred to here is illustrated by agni-hotra, paśu-bandha and soma. In these rituals, fire is taken from the gārhapatya-altar and carried first to the āhavanīya-altar to the east of it.

(3) He offers his own body to burn the faggots etc. (angam nayati samnamamānah). (अङ्गति इत्यग्निः ।) Sāyaṇa recognizes here the facts that the sacred fuel that is put into the altar is burnt by agni and carried as offerings (kāshṭha-dāha) and that the fire is what bakes the offerings (havishpāka). The expression of Yāska 'samnamamānah' is explained by Sāyaṇa as "having himself become well attenuated and inclined to burn the fuel and cook the offering" (samyak svayam eva prahvībhavan).

(4) Yāska refers to the view of an earlier Nirukta-kāra, Sthaulāshṭhīvin (son of the sage Sthūlāshṭhīva) that Agni is so called because he does not

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moisten but dries up (aknopana, न क्नोपयति न स्नेहयति ।). Sāyaṇa sees here the imagery of the sacrificial fire mercilessly burning up the sacred fuel (kāshṭhādikam rūkshayati). However, the Nirukta-kāra takes 'knu' as the root (meaning "to make wet", "to moisten"), which is negated in the word (a-knu) (अनो नानाप्रतिषेधे ।), which takes the form Agni (अक्नोपयतीत्यग्निः ।). No reference is necessarily made to the sacrificial fire. It may be conceded that even Sāyaṇa uses only the word wood etc. (kāshṭhādikam). Here the derivation is from the similarity of letters (akshara-sāmya).

(5) Another Nirukta-kāra, Śākapūṇi (Rathītara), derives the word Agni from three letters in the word each being a fragment of a root, relies of condensed words (tribhya ākhyātebhyo jāyate) :

(i) इण् "to go", "to move" (*Dhātu-pāṭha,* 24,36)

एति → अयन → (√इ = अ) +

(ii) अक्तोञ्ज् – अनक्ति, "to decorate", "to anoint", "to shine" *(Dhātupāṭha* 29,21)

क → (ग → ग्) (√अञ्ज् = ग्)

alternately, दह , "to burn" *(Dhātu-pāṭha,* 23,22)

→ दग्ध → (ग्) (√दह् = ग्) +

(iii) णीञ् "to lead", "to carry" (*Dhātu-pāṭha,* 22,5)

→ नीतः → (√नी shortened into नि)

अ + ग् + नि = अग्नि । "one who moves, shines (burns) and leads"

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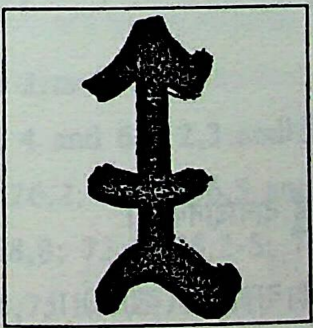
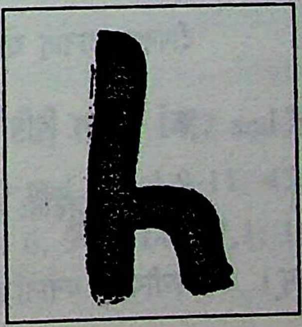
Here the derivation follows the similarity of phonemes (varṇa-sāmya).

But grammatically, the word 'agni' is derived from 'agi gatau', 'agi' becoming 'ag' (अङ्गेर्नलोपश्च । *Uṇādi-sūtra,* 4,490) and with the suffix 'ni' to the root. The etymological sense is that fire goes up (अङ्गति ऊर्ध्वं गच्छति). That the word 'agni' is formed from a root, however, is not universally accepted. A word has not only a root, but a crude and principle part of the word, the base of a noun in its uninflected state. This is not a root, nor the affix or suffix to a root. This is called 'prātipadika'. Some grammarians and Nirukta-kāras like Śākaṭāyana hold these prātipadikas are also derived from the root. But other authorities like Gārgya hold that not all prātipadikas are formed from the roots. Yāska mentions this controvery (1,12) :

नामाख्यातजातानीति शाकटायनो नैरुक्तसमयश्च । न
सर्वाणीति गार्ग्यो वैयाकरणानां चैके ॥

The opinion of Gārgya and some grammarians is that Agni is a word that is independent and indivisible (akhaṇḍa); it is a prātipadika which can not be analysed into, or explained with reference to, a root, affix and so on.





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अग्निं ।	The fire-god; the god who leads us upward, guides all activity; the god of the earth, who occurs as Vāyu in the midregion and as Sūrya in the sky.
ईळे (ईडे)	I praise, pray, beg, worship.
पुरोहितं ।	the spirit placed in front of man from ancient times.
यज्ञस्य ।	of the sacrifice; of worship.
देवम् ।	the luminous divinity; the bestower of gifts.
ऋत्विजम् ।	the keeper of the cosmic order (ṛta) and inspirer of all activities.
होतारम् ।	the invoker of all gods.
रत्नधातमम् ।	the best (most bountiful) bestower of wealth.

अग्निम् ।	अग्रं प्रति प्रणीयते ॥
ईळे ।	याचामीळिरध्येषणकर्मा, पूजाकर्मा वा ॥
पुरोहितम् ।	पुरः एनं दधाति ॥
देवम् ।	दीपनात् दानात् द्योतनाद्वा ॥
ऋत्विजम् ।	ऋतं सत्यस्य विधिविधानं अनु यजति ॥
होतारम् ।	ह्वातारम् । जुहोतेः (और्णवाभः ।) । हु दानादानयोः ॥
रत्नधातमम् ।	रमणीयानां धनानां दातृतमम् । दधातिः दानार्थे । (ददाति) ॥

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Agni as a deity (devatā) has been referred to in the Ṛgveda in the third person (paroksha-kṛta) and has also been directly addressed (prataksha-kṛta). The stanzas in which Agni has thus been invoked in the first book (maṇḍala) of *Ṛgveda-samhitā)* have been mentioned below. (The numbers refer to Sūkta and mantra respectively.)

I. *Paroksha-kṛta*

(i) अग्निः ।

1,2 and 5; 12,6; 27,12; 36,17-18; 59,2 and 6 and 7; 60,4; 65,4; 69,2 and 3; 70,1 and 3; 71,8; 72,9; 74,3; 77,2 and 4-5; 79,5 and 12; 93,5; 98,2; 99,1; 105,14; 107,3; 112,17; 124,11; 127,7; 128,1,3-4 and 6-7; 136,7; 141,12-13; 142,11; 143,2 and 5-6; 145,5; 148,2; 157,1; 161,9 and 14; 162,15; 169,3; 188,10-11.

(ii) अग्निम् ।

1,1; 12,1 and 7 and 9; 14,3; 23,20; 27,1; 35,1; 36,1-2 and 7 and 11; 38,13; 44, 3-4 and 8; 45,4; 58,7; 71,7; 72,4; 84,18; 96,1-7; 106,1; 112,1; 113,9; 116,8; 127,1; 128,8; 136,6; 139,1; 143,4 and 7; 146,1; 157,5; 161,3; 164,46; 170,4; 174,3; 181,9; 186,3.

II. *Prataksha-kṛta* (अग्ने ।)

1,1 and 4 and 6; 12,3 and 5 and 10 and 12; 13,4; 14,7 and 10-11; 15,4; 22,9; 26,2; 27,4; 36,5 and 12; 44,1-2,5 and 7 and 9-11; 45,6 and 8 and 10; 58,8; 73,4; 75,2-5; 76,5; 79,4 and 6; 94,1-14; 97,1; 105,13; 127,11; 144,7; 147,5; 161,1; 188,3; 189,1-3.

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III. THE SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION (ADHYĀTMA)

The third interpretation makes the hidden meaning the most significant detail in the mantra. Theword 'adhyātma' strictly means the spirit or soul inside the body (आत्मनि शरीरे इत्यध्यात्मम् ।). It is the hidden reality which must be 'known' by study, austerity and divine grace. It is outside the scope of rituals. It is to be noted that the mantras of *Ṛgveda* do not have a natural 'viniyoga' (application in ritualistic action). There are only three items that must be borne in mind when the mantra is recited, studied or employed in any ritual: the ṛshi (sage-seer), chhandas (metrical form) and the devatā (deity). None of these items is diectly related to any ritual, except probably the last one. The mantras where the deity is directly addressed (pratyaksha-kṛta), or indirectly eulogized (paroksha-kṛta) are either in the nature of praise (or eulogy) (stuti), or in the form of a prayer (āśisha) for a mundane benefit (like heavenly pleasures, long life, wealth or progeny). We read in *Bṛhaddevatā* (1,7-10) :

स्तुतिस्तु नाम्ना रूपेण कर्मणा बान्धवेन च ।
स्वर्गायुर्धनपुत्राद्यैरर्थैराशीस्तु कथ्यते ॥

Praise is in terms of names, forms, actions or relations of the deity addressed or invoked. It is different in nature and function from prayer which arises from longings for some material benefit or other.

स्तुत्याशिषौ तु यास्वृक्षु दृश्येतेऽल्पास्तु ता इह ।
ताभ्यश्चाल्पतरास्ताः स्युः स्वर्गो याभिस्तु याच्यते ॥

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This is a significant verse. It states clearly that the mantras of the Ṛgveda are more in favour of praise than prayer, and hence their ritualistic application (viniyoga) is minimal. Few indeed, says Śaunaka, are the passages in Ṛgveda, where praise and prayer are together found; and fewer still are the passages where prayer for heaven alone predominates. One is reminded of the brāhmaṇa injunctions like स्वर्गकामो ज्योतिष्टोमेन यजेत ।, which are quite contrary to the spirit of Ṛgveda. The ṛchas are more in the nature of praises than prayer. Praises are generally not accompanied by prayers.

स्तुवद्भिर्वा ब्रुवद्भिर्वा ऋषिभिस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः ।
भवत्युभयमेवोक्तमुभयं ह्यर्थतः समम् ॥

Praise is not different from utterances. Both are similar in nature and intent; there is no asking for favour in them. The sage-seers who have realized the Real have nothing to gain when they eulogize a deity or describe it. Passages in Ṛgveda are mostly of this nature. The question of ritualistic application (viniyoga) does not arise. Hence, the ritualistic interpretation (adhi-yajña or yājñika) of Ṛgveda becomes irrelevant.

The ritualistic interpretation (adhi-yajña) of Ṛgveda becomes valid or feasible only when a large number of passages in this Samhitā have a ritualistic application (viniyoga), which involves prayers (āśishah) and actions (karma) directed towards the accomplishment of some objective (artha). The prayers and action may of course be accompanied by praises (stuti), but the praises are incidental, secondary and optional. *Bṛhaddevatā* explicitly points out that

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such passages are few in Ṛgveda. The objective of all rituals ultimately is heaven or celestial pleasures (svarga); the expression svarga (incomparable) and unsurpassed happiness, (niratiśaya-sukha) includes all mundane benefits like long life, wealth, children and so on. It is for these benefits that prayers are made. To cite again *Bṛhaddevatā,* fewer are the passages in Ṛgveda where heaven is prayed for. It is the opinion of Śaunaka, at any rate in these verses, that Ṛgveda has very slender ritualistic orientation.

That praise (stuti) is different from prayer (āśishah) is a significant suggestion. The latter involves ritualistic action, while the former is mere spontaneous articulation consequent on the experience of the supereminence or majesty of the deity. *Bṛhaddevatā* (1,34) makes this point also :

मन्त्रा नानाप्रकाराः स्युर्दृष्टा वै मन्त्रदर्शिभिः ।
स्तुत्या चैव विभूत्या च प्रभावाद्देवतात्मनः ॥

The passages of *Ṛgveda* due to the sage-seers who have perceived reality directly are of many kinds, on account of praises (stuti), majesty or preëminence (vibhūti), and the extraordinary power and glory of the deities eulogized in the mantras.

Further, the present interpretation focusses attention not on the different deities associated with different mantras in *Ṛgveda,* but on the one Self, of which all the deities are manifestations. The view of Yāska *(Nirukta,* 7,4) has already been mentioned :

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माहाभाग्योद्देवतायाः एक आत्मा बहुधा स्तूयते ॥

"On account of the supereminence of the Deity, its single soul or spirit (eka ātmā) is praised in many ways. The deities explicitly mentioned in the Vedic passages are no doubt many; but all these deities are but aspects of the one Deity, who indeed is the soul (self) of all the deities :

एकस्यात्मनोऽन्ये देवाः प्रत्यङ्गानि भवन्ति ॥

The expression 'deva' signifies, according to Yāska, "illumination", "light", or "shining" (dīpanād dyotanād vā). The one soul (self) manifests itself in several ways, and these are the 'pratyaṅgas' (limbs, aspects) of that one soul (self). Each deity is but one way the Self manifests itself; and in that sense, the deities are generated from the one Self. In the words of Yāska : आत्मजन्मानः । This generation or production is spontaneous and there is no difference between the Self and the deities : स्वस्मात् स्वयं जायन्ते । The Self indeed is the whole of each of the deities. And each deity is interwoven with the other deities, for they are all aspects of the one Self : इतरेतरजन्मानो भवन्ति । इतरेतर प्रकृतयः । कर्मजन्मानः ॥

The spiritual interpretation (adhyātma) is so called because its premise is the one Self (soul or spirit), which is sometimes identified with Sūrya or Prajāpati or Brahman, as for instance in *Bṛhaddevatā* (1,61-70) :

भवद्भूतस्य भव्यस्य जङ्गमस्थावरस्य च ।
अस्यैके सूर्यमेवैकं प्रभवं प्रलयं विदुः ॥ (६१)

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असतश्च सतश्चैव योनिरेषा प्रजापतिः ।
यदक्षरं च वाच्यं च यथैतद् ब्रह्म शाश्वतम् ।। (६२)

Some identify this one Self with Sūrya who is the one source and destiny of all that exists, existed and will come into existence, and all that is moving and that is stationary. (cf. RV 1,50,10; 1,115,1; 5,1,47 etc.) This Self, also known as Prajāpati, is the source of all that is real and all that is unreal (cf. RV 10,169,4; 10,121,10). It is imperishable and what can not be indicated in speech. It is the Brahman, everlasting (cf. RV 10,4,7; 1,105,15; 8,17,3; 9,96,6; 8,90,3; 10,162,1).

कृत्वैष हि त्रिधात्मानमेषु लोकेषु तिष्ठति ।
दैवान्यथायथं सर्वान् निवेश्य स्वेषु रश्मिषु ।। (६३)

This one self (called Sūrya, Prajāpati or Brahman) divides itself threefold, and abides in all these spheres (as Agni on earth, as Vāyu or Indra in atmosphere, and as Sūrya in the celestial sphere). And in the rays of Sūrya are accommodated all the gods with their respective functions.

एतद्भूतेषु लोकेषु अग्निभूतं स्थितं त्रिधा ।
ऋषयो गीर्भिरर्चन्ति व्यञ्जितं नामभिस्त्रिभिः ।। (६४)

This self again is known as Agni in all the spheres, and it abides in three forms (Agni on earth; Vāyu or Indra in atmosphere; and Sūrya in the celestial sphere). The sages worship this spirit represented by the three names (Agni, Vāyu and Sūrya) with their songs.

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तिष्ठत्येष हि भूतानां जठरे जठरे ज्वलन्
त्रिस्थानां चैनमर्चन्ति होत्रायां व्यक्तबर्हिषः ॥ (६८)

This spirit (self) abides glowing in the interior of each of the beings; and he is worshipped as having three abodes (earth, atmosphere and the celestial sphere), in all the invocations and with the sacrificial litter spread out as worship for him.

अग्निरस्मिन्नथेन्द्रस्तु मध्यतो वायुरेव च ।
सूर्यो दिवीति विज्ञेयास्तत्र एवेह देवताः ॥ (६९)
एतासामेव माहात्म्यान्नामान्यत्वं विधीयते ।
तत्तत् स्थानविभिगेन तत्र तत्रेह दृश्यते ॥ (७०)

There are only three deities: Agni on earth, Indra or Vāyu in the midregion, and Sūrya in the celestial sphere. It is owing to the supereminence of these three that all the other deities are known by their diverse appellations. It can be seen that these appellations are various, because of the different spheres in which they function. All the deities are so many aspects or manifestations of the three deities, Agni, Vāyu (Indra) and Sūrya, and the three deities in their turn are the aspects or manifestations of the One Self (eka ātmā).

तासामियं विभूतिर्हि नामानि यदनेकशः ।
आहुस्तासां तु मन्त्रेषु कवयोऽन्योन्ययोनिताम् ॥ (७१)

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The names of the three deities are diverse owing to the different manifestations of the extraordinary power (of the One Self). The sage-seers speak of them in the mantras as having reciprocal origination.

यथास्थानं प्रदिष्टास्ता नामान्यत्वेन देवताः।
तद्भक्तास्तत्प्रधानाश्च केचिदेवं वदन्ति ताः॥ (७२)

पृथक् पुरस्ताद्ये तूक्ता लोकादिपतयस्त्रयः।
तेषामात्मैव तत्सर्वं यद्यद् भक्तिः प्रकीर्त्यते॥ (७३)

They are designated according to the spheres (Agni on earth etc.), and *all the other* deities are also named differently according to the spheres, as belonging to the paricular sphere or as chiefly concerned with it. The three chief lords of the spheres, named differently and mentioned separately, are but the aspects of the one self (the soul of all the deities); and this self is the distinguishing attribute of all the deities without exception (ātmā sarvam devasya). The deities are essentially and fundamentally the one self or spirit. This is the 'adhyātma' approach of the mantras.

The one self or spirit is in this hymn addressed as Agni. *Bṛhaddevatā* (1,86) prescribes that the mantra is to be regarded as belonging to Agni where the distinguished marks of Agni are spoken of, or when the mantra is recited during the offerings of oblations are meant for Agni, or when simply the names of Agni are invoked :

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व्यवस्येन्मन्त्रमाग्नेयं लिङ्गैराग्नेश्च लक्षितम् ।
हविष्पंक्तिप्रधानैश्च नामाह्वानैश्च कवलैः ॥ (१, ८६)

This text, following *Nirukta,* gives this definition of Agni : Agni is so called because he is carried about by human beings (नीयतेऽयं नृभिः यस्मात् ।) and because he leads human beings to the worlds above (नयत्यस्मादसौ च तम् ।). In the former function, he is designated as terrestrial fire (pārthivāgni) or fire on earth, while in the latter he is celestial fire (divyāgni, mādhyamah vyomni), represented by lightning. Both fires are known as soon as they are born (*viz.* appear), by all beings; and both know (*viz.* reveal) all things that are born (*viz.* that are there, that is to say, reveal all things that are around. Hence both fires are called alike Jātavedas.

यद्विद्यते हि जातः सञ्जातैर्यद्वात्र विद्यते ।
तैनेभौ तुल्यनामानौ उभौ लोके समाप्नुतः ॥ (१,९२)

And both fires (forms of Agni) are emanations from Sūrya, and therefore whenever in any hymn Agni is eulogized, it is Sūrya that owns that mantra :

सूर्यः सूक्तस्य भाक् यत्र ज्ञेयौ वैश्वानरस्तुतौ ।
सूर्यप्रसूतावग्नी तु दृष्टौ पार्थिवमध्यमौ ॥ (९,१००)

Further, Agni is like Sūrya in the matter of being 'hairy' or keśin (with flames, raśmibhih)

अर्चिर्भिः केश्ययं त्वाग्निर्विद्युद्भिश्चैव मध्यमः ।
असौ तु रश्मिभिः केशी तेनैनानाह केशिनः ॥ (१,९४)

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Like the rays of the sun darting out of Sūrya, flames come out of the terrestrial fire (pārthiva), and the streaks of light from lightning (madhyama). It is therefore that the fire, the lightning and the sun are all described as 'hairy' (keśinah). And it is impossible to explain how they are produced, what their generative power is or where they abide or arise for they are all-pervasive (1,96)

ने चैवेषां प्रसूतिर्वा विभूतिस्थानजन्म वा।
निर्वक्तुं शक्यमेतैर्हि कृत्स्नं व्याप्तमिदं जगत्॥ (१, ९६)

It is the express view of Ṛgveda that the supreme reality is one, and the different deities ae only names thereof

यो देवानां नामधा एक एव॥ (१०,८२,३)
द्यावाभूमी जनयन्देव एवः॥ (१०,८१,३)
इन्द्रं मित्रं वरुणमग्निनामाहुरथो
दिव्यः स सुपर्णो गरुत्मान्॥
एकं सत्विप्रा बहुधा वधन्त्यंग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः॥ (१,१६४,४६)
नामानि सर्वाणि यमाविशान्ति तं वै विष्णुं परममुदाहरन्ति॥
(भाल्लवेयश्रुतिः)

In the passages of Ṛgveda (as for instance in 10,88,10 and 11), sometimes the supreme reality, Sūrya is eulogized as Agni (तदग्नीकृत्य स्तौति।), and sometimes Agni is eulogized as Sūrya (अथैनमादित्यीकृत्य स्तौति।). When Agni is the name by which Sūrya is invoked, the contextual justification is

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that Agni is invoked as the 'hotṛ' (the invoking priest in the sacrificial ritual). This is characteristic of Agni (the sacrificial fire) and not of Sūrya (अग्नेः कर्म न सूर्यस्य।). The Ṛgvedic passage)10,88,10), which Yāska has chosen to explain (*Nirukta,* 7,7) in this context, is :

स्तोमेन हि दिवि देवासो
अग्निमजीजनच्छक्तिभी
रोदसि प्राम्।
तमू अकृण्वंस्त्रेधा भुवे कं न
ओषधीः पचति विश्वरूपाः ॥

The gods (devāsah) generated (ajījanat) Agni in the celestial sphere (divi) with their praises (stomena). Agni fills (prām) both worlds (rodasī, dyāvāpṛthivyau, earth and heaven) with their powers (śaktibhī). Three spheres were assigned to him (tredhā bhuve). According to Śākapūṇi, the three spheres are earth, atmosphere (or mid-region) and the sky :

पृथिव्यामन्तरिक्षे दिवीति शाकपूणिः।

The same hymn in another stanza (10,88,6) describes Agni as the 'head' of the world at night; and he is reborn as Sūrya at dawn

मूर्धा भुवो भवति नक्तमग्निस्ततः
सूर्यो जायते प्रातरुद्यन्।

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Agni is the 'head' (mūrdhā), because like the body which cannot be alive without the head, the worlds and the living beings cannot subsist without Agni, and all dissolve into one piece in darkness.

मूर्धा मूर्तमस्मिन्दीयते। मूर्धा यः सर्वेषां
भूतानां भवति नक्तं अग्निः।

The worlds and the living beings appear once again as having their own individual forms, when Agni arises as the sun in the morning :

ततः सूर्यो जायते प्रातरुद्यन्त्स एव ॥

This also illustrates Yāska's idea of gods being 'itaretara-janmānah' : Agni is born out of Sūrya, and Sūrya is born out of Agni.

The adhyāma interpretation does not confine its attention to Agni as the fire-god on earth. This agni is symbolic and suggestive. It is to be taken in the sense of the deeper reality, the self of Agni, which is the One Self (eka ātmā). Rāghavendra-tīrtha's introductory remarks in his *Mantrārtha-mañjari*

आद्यं आग्नेयं सूक्तं नवर्चं वर्गद्वयात्मकं गायत्री. छन्दस्कं अग्निदेवताकं
तदन्तर्गत तन्नामकविष्णुदेवताकं च ॥

brings out the point that although Agni is the express deity of this hymn (first sūkta in the first maṇḍala), the deity in reality is the internal being in it, Vishṇu, who is known to *Bṛhaddevatā* as Sūrya, Prajāpati or Brahman.

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Whatever particular deity is named in the Ṛgvedic passages, the real deity of all the passages is this Supreme Self (called Vishṇu, Sūrya, Prajāpati or Brahman) the self of all the different deities. The force of the word 'च'। (and) in the above statement of Rāghavendra-tīrtha is that the particular deity named in the hymn (Agni) is to be considered alongside the inner reality of this deity, in fact, of all the deities (*viz.* Vishṇu).

Thus the hymn may be said to have two 'viniyogas', the main one being the attainment of liberation (emancipation from all distresses, moksha) through securing the love of the Supreme Self, and the other (intermediary) being application in the rituals (karma) :

विनियोगो विष्णुप्रीतिद्वारा मोक्षः । अनान्तरः विनियोगः कर्मणि ॥

The former is accomplished by praise (stuti), and the latter by prayer (āśishah). The adhyātma interpretation emphasizes the former, while the adhi-yajña interpretation attends to the latter.

Accordingly, the verb ईळे (ईडे) in the mantra has the import of eulogizing the Supreme Spirit, who is the inspirer of all the faculties of the devotee who is intent on emancipation, and the bestower of the appropriate benefits on the seeker after truth *(Mantrārtha-mañjari)* :

ईळे (अध्यात्मम्) । सर्वत्र मोक्षसाधको यः कश्चित् सात्त्विक एव यजमानः ज्ञेयः । ज्ञानार्थिनः सर्वेन्द्रियप्रेरकस्य यथोचितभोगप्रदस्य च स्तुत्यता युक्ता ॥

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The words signifying the names of the deities like Agni, Indra and so on, occuring in Ṛgvedic passages are of two types, according to *Mantrārtha-mañjari*: one referring to the deity and the other referring to Godhead. In the present mantra, Agni is both the deity and the Godhead. The two are coalesced, as for instance milk and water (नीरसंवलितक्षीरवत् ।), or as the fire and the hot iron-ball (अयःपिण्डसमारूढवह्निवत् ।). The two are both 'चित्' and it is therefore that they can coalesec.

The word 'चित्' is hard to render into English. It combines the connotations of shining, appearance, understanding, knowing, being alive and perceiving; it means light, illumination, consciousness that is pure in the sense of being devoid of object-reference. In Indian books, it is associated with existence or reality (चित्) and bliss inherent in existence (आनन्द); it exists as the spirit, as something that is alive and as full of light (being selfluminous). The word 'चित्' is often used in the sense of the light of pure consciousness, identical with the Supreme reality.

The work mentioned above distinguishes the Supreme Spirit (bhagavach-chit) as pure and transcendental consciousness from the soul (jīva-chit). The former is Godhead (Vishṇu, viz. Brahman), while the lạtter is the deity (Agni). In the Vedic passages, we sometimes find words which emphasize the presence of one Godhead in any particular deity and in all the deities (bhagavad-vāchinah, kevala-śuddha-chid-vāchinah), as for instance when we read अयमग्निर्वैश्वानरः । and sometimes words which illustrate only the distinguishing characteristics of a deity (jīva-chid-vāchinah), as for instance when we read

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भयादस्याग्निस्तपति । Agni as a ritual deity has a personality that is limited, specific and conditioned. At first glance, when Agni is invoked, addressed or referred to in a mantra, the familiar meaning of ritual fire arises in the mind. But the intended meaning is the Godhead present within this deity. If the former is the mukhya-vṛtti, the latter is the parama-mukhya-vṛtti.

Ānanda-tīrtha in his *Ṛgbhāshya* explains the spiritual significance of the expression Agni in the first hymn :

अग्निशब्दोऽयमग्र एवाभिपूज्यताम् ।
अग्र्यत्वं अग्रनेतृत्वं अत्तिमङ्गागनेतृताम् ॥१॥

The word 'agni' is a modified form, grammatically valid and etymologically significant, of the principal word 'agra' (meaning "primacy", "superiority") in its locative case (agre) -

(सप्तम्यन्तात् अग्रशब्दात् 'तद्धिताः', ४॥१॥७६॥ ज्ञापितो
निप्रत्ययः । रशब्दलोपः । 'सुपो धातुप्रातिपदिकयोः' २॥४॥७१॥
इत्युपपदसुलोपः । ततश्च अग्नि इति रूपम् ॥)

(1) Of all the deities that are worship-worthy, Agni is the foremost; he is at the head of all deities, he is superior to them all. He must be reverenced first.

अग्र एव अशेषपूज्येभ्यः, पूर्वमेव अभिपूज्यताम् ॥
(Jayatīrtha)

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सर्वपूज्येभ्यः प्रथमपूज्यः ।

(Rāghavendra-tīrtha)

(2) Agni was before anything else made its appearance; in this sense, it is 'agra' (ahead, prior, primary).

अग्रे भवः । इत्यर्थे तद्धितनिप्रत्यये रशाब्दलोपे अग्निरिति सिद्धेः । अग्रे भवम् । सर्वोत्तमम् ॥

Being first to appear, prior to all else (agryatvam) signifies superiority (uttamatva) among all.

(3) Agni is also the foremost leader, inspirer; the primary agent for all activity (agraṇī); the sine qua non of all that exists and moves.

अग्रनेतृत्वं प्रथमप्रवर्तकत्वम् ॥

In the ritualistic interpetation, this is a significant expression of the sacred fire that is lit priorly and carried about first. Ānanda-tīrtha points out that by the word yajña it is not only the external and physical ritual (bāhya-yajña) that is meant, but more importantly the inner sacrifice (called jñāna-yajña), known as adhyātma (pertaining to the body-mind complex). Here, as Vishṇu is the forerunner of all bodily, sensory and mental activities. This is the adhyātma-form, hidden inside the body-mind complex (शरीरान्तर्गतेश्वरादिरूपः ।).

(4) Ānanda-tīrtha's 'attim' is explained by Jayatīrtha as follows :

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अत्तिमत्तृत्वम् धातुनिर्देशः। तेन तदर्थस्य कर्ता लक्ष्यते।
बहिः संहर्तृत्वं हविषः अत्तृत्वम्। अध्यात्मं विषयाणाम्॥

The root-meaning of 'atti' is "to eat", "to consume" (ad bhakshaṇe); here the word refers to the one who eats, the one who consumes (kartā, the agent). In the external ritual, Agni as the fire-deity consumes the oblations and offerings (havishah attṛtvam). In the inner sacrifice (adhyātme), Agni (in the body-mind complex) is one who receives sense-impressions and input from the surrounding world. It is as if the world is offering oblations to the Godhead within each individual. Ones very life is a sacrifice, and Agni is the Supreme Spirit for whom the sacrifice is made.

(5) There is also an extended meaning pertaining to what was said earlier (अग्रनेतृत्वं); and thiṣ aṅga-netṛtva. Agni in the body (adhyātma) is the inspirer of all physical, physiological and psychological activities in the body, even as the sacrificial fire prompts all ritual activities :

अङ्गनेतृतां अध्यात्मं विष्णोः अग्नेश्च।
सर्वशरीराणां प्रवर्तकत्वम्॥

(Jayatīrtha)

अङ्गं शरीरं नयति प्रेरयति। सर्वशरीर प्रवर्तकम्।

(Rāghavendra-tīrtha)

(6) Then, there is this explanation of Agni being itself unmoving and not dependently originating any activity (अगनेतृता).

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अगनेतृतां स्वतो न गच्छति न प्रवर्तते। यद्विशयं तस्य प्रवर्तकत्वम्॥

(Jayatīrtha)

अङ्गागनयनशीलत्वरूपार्थविशेषस्य भगवति लाभात् अन्यथा तदलाभात्॥

(Padārtha-dīpikā)

Then Ānanda-tīrtha proceeds to explain the other details pertaining to Agni, pointing out the relevance of the mystic or spiritual interpretation.

आह तं स्तौम्यशेषस्य पूर्वमेव हितं प्रभुः।
ऋत्विङ्नियामकत्वेन यज्ञानां ऋत्विजं सदा ॥२॥

1. The Ṛgvedic expression ईळे is taken in the sense of स्तौमि (I eulogize, I praise, I pray). Rāghavendra-tīrtha justifies that it is but proper that Agni, whose nature has been described above, should be reverenced by those who aspire for knowledge (of the Supreme Spirit), for that is the purpose of describing the dimensions of his nature. Knowledge results from sensory and mental funcions which are all inspired by the Supreme Spirit :

विशेषणानां कृत्यं तु ज्ञानार्थिनः सर्वेन्द्रियप्रेरकस्य यथोचितभोगप्रदस्य च स्तुत्यता युक्ता॥

(Mantrārtha-mañjarī)

2. The word 'purohita' comes for explanation. Agni (the deity and the Godhead within it) is beneficent (hita) from the beginning, from immemorial

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past (पूर्वमेव, Jayati-tīrtha अनादित एव।). Rāghavendra-tīrtha adds that Agni facilitates the lives of all creatures and is favourably disposed towards all

अनादितः सर्वप्राणिनामनुकूलम्। सर्वानुकूलम्॥

(Mantrārtha-mañjarī)

It is because of this that he becomes worthy of reverence (हितो हि स्तुत्यो भवति। Jayatīrtha).

Śrīnivasa-tīrtha points out that Agni is a 'purohita' in the above sense in two ways : one in the external sacrificial ritual, where as the sacred fire he symbolizes the foremost priest, and the other as the Godhead inherent in this deity in the internal ritual (jñāna-yajña). The former is secondary, while the latter is of primary significance

पुरोहितं मुख्यामुख्याभ्यां बाह्ययज्ञे अमुख्यत्वेन। अग्रेः बाह्ययज्ञे तदन्तर्गतस्य हरेः। अध्यात्मं च ज्ञानयज्ञे हरेर्मुख्यत्वेन। इति विवेकः॥

(Padārtha-prakāśikā)

3. Agni is hailed as a priest, ṛtvik, and Ānanda-tīrtha takes the word in the sense of one who governs, controls and inspires the sacrificial priest (ऋत्विङ्नियामकत्वेन यज्ञानां ऋित्विजं). The priest in all his activities depends solely on this inner light and guide (सदा तदधीनत्वात्।, Jaya-tīrtha). And further, sacrifice may be external or internal. When it is internal (adhyātma), the deities governing the sense-functions are to be regarded as priests, and the Godhead is the inner controller and inspirer of these priests :

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यज्ञानां बाह्यानां आध्यात्मिकानां च । अध्यात्मं इन्द्रियदेवा ऋत्विजः ॥

(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā)

Rāghavendra-tīrtha explains :

(यज्ञस्य जातौ एकवचनम् ।) ज्योतिष्टोमादीनां कृर्तृतया ऋत्विङ्नामकेषु अध्वर्युहोत्रुद्गातृप्रभृतिषु नियामकतय । स्थिततया...ऋत्विङ्नामकम् । (अध्यात्म) ज्ञानयज्ञस्य । ऋत्विग्भूतेन्द्रियाभिमानिनियामकतया तत्र स्थितत्वेन ऋत्विङ्नियामकम् ॥

(Mantrārtha-mañjari)

The word in the mantra, 'yajñasya' is in the singular, but it is used in the collective sense (jāti). The yajñas are of many kinds, principally of two varieties : the usual external rituals where the priestly activities entail the recitation of relevant mantras, and the purely mental yājñas (adhyātma) where the relevant understanding and knowledge play the major role. If Agni as a deity (yajña-devatā) dominates the external sacrifice (bāhya-yajña), he is the one who inspires the priests (hotṛ etc.) and governs their activities (niyāmaka). When, however, it is the spiritual variety of sacrifice (adhyātma), Agni (as Godhead) is the inspirer and director of all the sensory functions and mental processes; which are like so many priests. The chief (mukhya) sacrifice, however, is the latter.

The same interpretation is found in the works of the later glossators :

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(i) ऋत्विङ्नियामकभगवत्येव मुख्यम् । यज्ञद्वये ऋत्विग्द्वयनियामकत्वं । ऋचां कर्माङ्गत्वादात्मनो ऋत्विक्समुदायस्य ऋग्भिः ऋक्स्तुत्यत्वमित्यत आह । ऋचां ऋत्विग्वाक्यतयेति । ऋत्विग्भिस्तावत् ऋग्भिः स्तुतिः क्रियते ॥

(Padārtha-prakāśikā)

The priest (ṛtvik) in the physical sacrifice functions in specific ways, reciting the specific mantras (ṛchah), as parts of the ritual (karmāṅga). He recitations are in the nature of praises, eulogy (stuti). Likewise, in the internal sacrifice, there is a group of priests (the sense-functions and mind). And they recite the praises of the Godhead within, who is the director and inspirer (niyāmaka).

(ii) ऋचां कर्माङ्गत्वात् ऋत्विग्भिः कर्मणि ऋच उदाहर्तव्याः । ततश्च ऋचां ऋत्विग्वाक्यतायां स्थितायां अग्निमीळ इति वाक्येन स्तुतिर्कारो ऋत्विज इति सिद्धम् भवति । ततश्च ऋत्विजां नियामकस्य तेषां ज्ञानप्रदस्य स्तुतिरुपपन्ना भवति । स्तावकेन स्वनियामकस्य तेषां ज्ञानप्रदस्य तेन रूपेण स्तोतव्यादिति भावः । (explaining Jaya-tīrtha's comments : कर्माङ्त्वादृचां ऋत्विग्वाक्यताया-मात्मनो नियामकस्य ज्ञानप्रदस्य च स्तुतिरुपपन्नैव ॥)

(Rūpāvatāra-ṭippaṇī of Satyanātha-yati)

Why should the priest whose business it is to praise be himself praised? It is not the priest who is praised, but the divinity within him who directs him to praise (niyāmaka). In the internal sacrifice, it is the Godhead who provides wisdom (jñana, knowledge, understanding) through sense-functions and mind. It is therefore but right that the mantras (like 'agnimīḷe') which

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the priests employ as praises, contain the praise of the inner controller of the priests themselves. It is in this sense that Agni is described as the priest (ṛtvik); he is in reality the inner director of the priest (niyāmaka).

(cf. also Chhalāri-Narasimhāchārya :

ऋत्विङ्नियामकत्वं कथं स्तुत्यत्वोपयोगीत्यत आह। कर्माङ्गत्वात्।
ऋत्विजां शस्त्रशंसनादिकर्मकरत्वात् ऋचां च कर्माङ्गत्वात् ऋत्विग्वाक्यत्वमात्मनः
होत्रादेरिति शेषो बाह्ययज्ञे। ज्ञानप्रदस्येति अत्र तु अध्यात्ममिति शेषः ॥

(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā-vivṛti)

also Śrīnivasa-tīrtha :

आध्यात्मिकयज्ञऋत्विगपेक्षया ज्ञानप्रदस्य ॥

(Padārtha-prakāśikā)

The word 'deva' in the mantra is explained, with reference to another word 'hotaram' in the mantra :

द्योतनाद्विजयात्कान्त्या स्तुत्या व्यवहृतेरपि।
गत्या रत्या च देवाख्यं होतृसंस्थं विशेषतः ॥३॥

There are six details mentioned here to explain what the word 'deva' signifies; and they are headed by the detail "light", "illumination" (षट्पदानि प्रतीकत्वेनोपादाय। द्योतनकृर्तृत्वादेव इत्यादि ज्ञेयम्। *Rūpāvatāra-ṭippaṇi)*. Illumination,

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victory, lustre, praise, movement and play are the details mentioned here. They all characterize divinity. The deva's actions are of the nature of light, and are praise-worthy (स्तुत्यर्थात् दीव्यतः कर्मणि । *Mantrārtha-mañjari).* The suggestion is that divinity is in terms of unlimited auspicious attributes (guṇādhikya).

The hotṛ is the priest who answers this description; hence Agni is called hotṛ, meaning thereby that Agni abides in the priest identified as hotṛ (hotṛ-samstham), as his inner controller. Otherwise, it would be meaningless to hail Agni, the deity, as hotṛ, the priest, one of the four priests (others being adhvaryu, udgātṛ and brahmā). It is also relevant here to recollect that the Veda assigned to the hotṛ-priest is *Ṛgveda,* the Veda that belongs to Agni. In a sacrifice, Godhead abides in the hotṛ-priest as the deity Agni, as the Supreme Spirit abiding in Agni himself as Godhead.

तत्र यज्ञे अग्निसंस्थेन रूपेण परमेश्वरो होतरि सन्निहितः इति विशेषः ॥

अग्निसंस्था means होतृसंस्थता । अग्नेः तद्गतपरमेश्वरस्य संस्थता । अग्निसंस्थेन रूपेण होतृसंस्थत्वम् । अग्नेः होतृसंस्थत्वे तदन्तर्गतहरेः तत्संस्थत्वं प्राप्तम् ॥

(Padārtha-prakāśikā)

Ānanda-tīrtha also brings out the symbolic significance of the hotṛ-deity :

अग्निसंस्थेन रूपेण यतोऽग्निर्होतृदेवता ।
इन्द्रियाग्निषु चार्थानां यद्धोता होतृनामकः ॥४॥

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If in the ṛtvik-priest, the form of the Godhead takes the form of the inner director of the specific priestly functions, especially the recitation of Ṛgvedic mantras, in the hotṛ-priest, Godhead abides as the very deity Agni, as the inner director of the deity itself. This is how Agni in this mantra is called hotṛ, the offerer of oblations (havishām hotā).

(cf. Satyanātha-yati :)

(i) अग्नौ ऋत्विक्शब्दवाच्यत्वं वागाद्यभिमानित्वात् ऋत्विङ्नियामकत्वेन, न तु ऋत्विक्षु ऋत्विक्तोपयोगिरूपविशेषस्थापनेन । होतरि तु इन्द्रियाभिमानि-रूपमेकं होतृत्वोपयोगि च अन्यदिति विशेषात् अग्निसंस्थेन रूपेणेत्युक्तमिति भावः ॥

(ii) ऋत्विक्षु ऋत्विङ्नियामकं ऋत्विक्शब्दवाच्यं भगवद्रूपं होतरि तु अग्निनियामकाग्निनामकमेव रूपमस्तीत्यतो विशेषतः अग्नेः होतृसंस्थता इति भावः ॥

(iii) अग्निनामक विष्णोः होतृसंस्थत्वमित्यर्थः । होतृदेवता = होत्रभि-मानित्वात् प्रसिद्धाग्निः यतो होतर्यस्ति, अतोऽग्निगतविष्णोः होतृस्थता इत्यर्थः ॥

(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā-vivṛti)

It is significant that the hotṛ is differentiated from the ṛtvik (priest in general), as an offerer of oblations (हविषां होता इति होतृशब्दः ।), and hence directly associated with the sacrificial fire, the deity Agni. Abiding in this priest is tantamount to abiding in Agni itself, as the inner controller (agni-niyāmaka). Hence, Jayatīrtha :

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होतृदेवता सन् यतोऽग्निर्होतरि स्थितः अतोऽग्निसंस्थेन रूपेण होतृसंस्थता युक्ता ॥

(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā)

The adhyātma interpretation of the expression hotṛ (the sacrificing priest, the offerer of oblations) involves the entering in of objects of knowledge into the sense-organs which are instruments of knowledge. The particular objects like form, sound etc. are the offerings prescribed and the sense-organs are the common fire into which the oblations are offered (indriyāgnishu cha arthānām yaddhotā). Godhead provides this enjoyment of objects (bhoga)

अध्यात्मं होतृशब्दं व्याख्याति - यद्यस्मादिन्द्रियाख्येषु अग्निषु अर्थानां
तत्तदिन्द्रियविषयलक्षणानां हविषां होता हरिः । तस्माच्च होतृनामकः ॥

Godhead (Agni-antargata) is described as the hotṛ in the sense of the provider of enjoyment (bhoga-prada). Therefore, the praise of such a beneficent patron is indicated (भोगप्रदस्य स्तुतिः कर्तव्या एव ।).

The word hotṛ has also the sense of invoking, inviting, beckoning (from the root 'hu'). The divine arrangement is that the objects of the world are invited to enter into the sense-orifices : form into the eyes, sound into the ears, smell into the nose and so on. Satyanātha-yati points out that this aspect also must be taken into consideration, along with the idea that the godhead abides in the hotṛ-priest :

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न केवलं होतृकृत्विकृस्थत्वात् होतृनामकः किन्तु इन्द्रियेषु अर्थाह्वानाच्च ॥

(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā-vivṛti)

The facilitation of the function of the hotṛ-priest is by dwelling within the priest (होतृत्वोपयोगि) is one form of Godhead; and being the deities favouring sense-functions (इन्द्रियाभिमानिरूपम्) another.

The final description of Agni in the mantra as "ratna-dhātamam" is now explained :

रतिधारकोत्तमत्वात् स रत्नधातम ईरितः ॥८॥

The word 'ratna' (jewel) (derived from रमु क्रीडायाम् । with ktna-suffix where क is elited) is no doubt included in lexicons in the names of wealth. But without forsaking that primary significance, another extended meaning may also be given : wealth is what causes delight, and so 'ratna' may be taken in the sense of enjoyment (rati). (रतिं रमणं सुखम् ।) That which produces, provides and supports enjoyment or delight is 'ratna-dhā' (धारणार्थकस्य धा धातोः ।); and if it is excessively so, it is 'ratna-dhā-tama' (अतिशयेनेतिं तमपोर्थः ।). It is synonymous with unsurpassed bliss :

यद्यपि रत्नशब्दो धननामसु पठितः (as for instance in the Nighaṇṭu रत्नं रयिः क्षेत्रम् । given in the *Vivṛti)* तथापि तदपरित्यागेन अर्थान्तरस्योक्तत्वान्न दोषः ॥

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रत्नं रतिं धत्ते इति रत्नधाः । अतिशयेन रत्नधाः रत्नधातमः ॥

(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā)

Rāghavendra-tīrtha, however, suggests that the word 'ratna' may also be tken in the sense of wealth; the word 'ratnadhā' would mean wealthy.

रत्नशब्दस्य धननामसु पाठात् धनाढ्यं इति वार्थः ॥

But he prefers the interpretation of 'ratna' as happiness

रमेः । सुखं धत्ते इति रत्नधाः । अतिशयेन रत्नधाः । निरवधिकानन्दः ॥

(Mantrārtha-mañjari)

In short, the word means excessive happiness (परमसुखत्वात् ।). And this is relevant in external, physical, sacrificial ritual as representing not only Agni as the deity but also as the Godhead abiding in the deity, as in the internal, mental, spiritual sacrifice (adhyātma), where the Godhead dwells in the body and provides not only for the enjoyment of sensory objects but also of the bliss of liberation.

For Satyanātha-yati says :

बाह्ययज्ञे अग्नेः तदन्तर्गतस्य हरेश्चेति सम्बन्धः । अध्यतमं आत्मनि शरीरे इति ॥

(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā-vivṛti)

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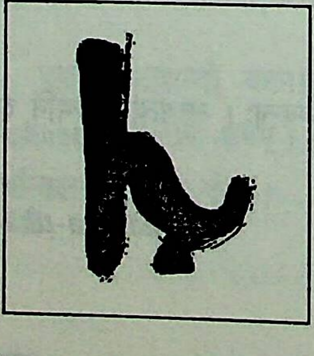
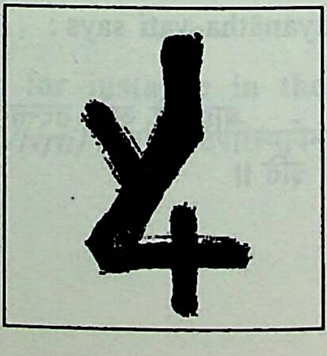
The interpretation offered by Ānanda-tīrtha follows the basic formulation contained in the Ṛgvedic passage यो देवानां नामधा एक एव। (10,82,3). The Godhead is one; but the deities named are several. Ānanda-tīrtha says at the very beginning of his *Ṛgbhāshya* :

यो देवानामिति श्रुत्या देवनाम्नां विशेषतः।
स्पष्टत्वात्तद्गतत्वेन तत्राहाग्रेऽग्निनामकम् ॥
अग्रणीत्वं यदग्नित्वमित्यग्रे नाम तद् भरेत्।
एवमेवाह भगवान्निरुक्तिं बादरायणः ॥
यथैवाग्न्यादयः शब्दाः प्रवर्तन्ते जनार्दने।
तथा निरुक्तिं वक्ष्यामो ज्ञानिनां ज्ञानसिद्धये ॥

Agni is the first deity mentioned in the Vedic corpus; hence he is the foremost (agraṇī). However, this is how the Supreme Spirit (Vishṇu) is praised at the vry commencement (agre). This is also why the reversed Bādarāyaṇa (Vyāsa) began his *Nirukta* with the word 'agni'. All the names connoting the several deities in reality are names only of the one Supreme Spirit, Vishṇu (viz. the Brahman of Vedānta).





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अग्निम् । Three-fold connotation:

1) the sacred fire of sacrifice as the deity (devatā)

2) the Supreme Spirit abiding in it and directing it

3) the Supreme Spirit dwelling in the body

ईळे । I praise, I reverence; I desire, I seek (from the original root इल्, "to desire", "to love"). I go towards.

पुरोहितम् । Beneficial to all from the very beginning; set or planted in front.

यज्ञस्य । of the sacrifice:

1) external physical sacrificial ritual (bāhya)

2) internal, spiritual sacrifice of the nature of knowledge (jñāna)

देवम् । light, illuminer

ऋत्विजम् । the inner controller of the priests (niyāmaka); the priests themselves are in fact the deities presiding over the sense-functions; trembling joy of truth (ऋत् + विज्).

होतरम् । abiding in the priest; the Supreme Spirit who offers oblations (respective sense-objects) into the fire of sense functions, and thus provides enjoyment (experience of sense-pleasures).

रत्नधातमम् । the best provider of the absolute and ultimate happiness, viz. the bliss of liberation

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(परोक्षकृतोऽयं मन्त्रं प्रथमपुरुषयोगात् ।)

अग्निम् । त्र्यर्थपरतया ।देवतापरत्वम् । तदन्तर्गतविष्णुपरत्वम् । अध्यात्मपरत्वम् ।।

ईळे। (ईडे ।) ईड स्तुतौ । स्तौमि । (√इल् → इळ् → ईळ्)

पुरोहितम् । अनादितः सर्वानुकूलम् ।

यज्ञस्य । जातावेकवचनम् । बाह्यानां आध्यात्मिकानां च । य (गतौ) → यच् (दाने) → यज् + न (कर्मणि)।

देवं । द्योतनाद्विजयात्कान्त्या...। दीव्यतेःद्योतनार्थत्वात्कर्तरि पचाद्यच् ।। (गुणाधिको हि स्तुत्यः ।) दि (कम्पने) → द्यु (कान्तौ) → दवि् → दीव् ।

ऋत्विजम् । अध्यात्मं इन्द्रियदेवाः । कर्मांगत्वादृचामृत्विग्वाक्यतायां आत्मनो नियामकस्य ज्ञानप्रदस्य च स्तुतिरुपपन्ना । ऋत्विङ्नियामकम् । ऋत्विक्षु परमेश्वरः सन्निहितं एव ।। ऋतु + इज् । कृ (कम्पने गतौ वा) → ऋज् → ऋजु → ऋत् (सत्यम्) + विज् (आनन्दोद्रेके) ।

होतारम् । होतृसंस्थम् । हविषां होता । अग्निसंस्थेन रूपेण होतृसंस्थता । इन्द्रियाख्येषु अग्निषु अर्थानां तत्तदिन्द्रियविषयलक्षणानां हविषां होता हरिः । भोगप्रदः ।। (परमसुखत्वाच्च तस्य स्तुतिः सुखार्थिनां युक्ता ।।) हु दाने; हू आह्वाने ।

रत्नधातमम् । रत्नं रतिं धत्ते (= ददाति) इति रत्नधाः । अतिशयेन रत्नधाः रत्नधातमः । निरवधिकानन्दमित्यर्थः ।। (अभीष्टदातृत्वादग्नेः स्तुतिर्युक्ता ।)

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(2)

(संहितापाठः ।)

अग्निः पूर्वेभिर्ऋषिभिरीड्यो

नूतनैरुत ।

स देवाँ एह वक्षति ॥२॥

(पदपाठः ।)

अग्निः । पूर्वेभिः । ऋषिभिः । ईड्यः । नूतनैः । उत ॥

सः । देवान् । आ । इह । वक्षति ॥

(अन्वयः ।)

अग्निः पूर्वेभिः ऋषिभिः ईड्यः । उत नूतनैः (ईड्यः) ।

सः देवान् इह आ वक्षति ॥

I

ADHI-YAJÑA

आधाने तृतीयेष्टौ प्रथमाज्यभागस्यानुवाक्या ॥आश्वलायनं २,१ ॥

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(Sāyaṇa)

अयमग्निः पूर्वेभिः पुरातनैः भृग्वङ्गिरसः प्रभृतिभिः ऋषिभिः ईड्यः स्तुत्यः । नूतनैः उत इदानीन्तनैः अस्माभिरपि स्तुत्यः ।। सोऽग्निः स्तुतः सन् इह यज्ञे देवान् हविर्भुज आ वक्षति ।। वह प्रापणे इति धातुः । आवहतु इत्यर्थः ।।

The prayer is for Agni bringing (ā vakshati) the other deities (devān) hither *iha), viz.to the place where the sacrifice is being performed. Agni has been praised for this purpose (īḍyah) by the sage-seers (ṛshibhīh) who were there in former days (pūrvaih), and who are there at present (nūtanaih). The deities must come here for partaking of the sacrificial offerings.

The sage-seers in the olden days are, according to Sāyṇa, those belonging to two lineages : Bhṛgu and Aṅgirasa.

(1) *Bhṛgu-lineage*

Bṛhaspati, Āyāsya, Atharvān, Dadhyañg, Vṛshan, Samvarta, Uśija, Uchathya, Bharadvājā, Dīrghatamas, Sudadhvān, Ṛbhu, Vibhvan, Vāja, Kavandha, and others.

(2) *Aṅgirasa-lineage*

Vasishṭha, Atri and others.

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There are several passages in *Ṛgveda* where the seer-sages of olden days and later or contemporary seer-sages are mentioned, as illustrated by some mantras in the seventh maṇḍala :

7,22,9 ये च पूर्वे ऋषयः ये च नूत्नाः
इन्द्र ब्रह्माणि जनयन्त विप्राः ॥

7,29,4 उ तो धाते पुरुष्या इदासन्
येषां पूर्व्येषां अशृणोर्ऋषीणाम् ॥

7,53,1 ते चिद्धि पूर्वे कवयो गृणन्तम् ॥

7,76,4 त इद् देवानां सधमाद ऋतावानः
कवयः पूर्व्यासः ॥

7,91,4 पुरा देवा अनवद्यास आसन् ॥

There are also references to mantras being old or new; as, e.g.

7,59,4 अभि व आवर्ते सुमतिर्नवीयसी ॥

7,61,6 प्र वां मन्मानि ऋचसे नवानि
कृतानि ब्रह्म जुजुषन्निमानि ॥

The import is that Agni is being adored all through the ages, by eulogies ascribed to sage-seers ancient and modern. Agni has always been worshipworthy.

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They all eulogized the fire-god, Agni, for no ritual is possible without this deity. In fact, Agni is praiseworthy (īḍya) because of this reason; and also because he is the one who brings all the other gods, and conveys to those gods what is offered by the priests. Agni is the only god that is visible and tangible (pratyaksha); all other gods are approached only through Agni (hence अग्निमुखा वै देवाः). The gods of the sacrificial ritual are 'consumers of the oblations' (havirbhujah).

There is a passage in *Ṛgveda* (4,7,1) where it is recounted that sages of old like Apnavāna and others belonging to the Bhṛgu lineage discovered and brought to light the glory of Agni, who was till then hidden in wood and raging in the forests, and who was also the support for all living creatures. He was indeed the praise-worthy one for all those who travel on the road that leads to the gods, for he was the first among the gods to appear.

अयमिह प्रथमो धायि धातृभिर्होता
यजिष्ठो अध्वरेष्वीड्यः ।
यमप्नवानो भृगवो विरुरुचुर्वनेषु
चित्रं विभ्वं विशे विशे ॥

(For details regarding adhvara, see later, notes on mantra 4)

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(अग्निः पूर्वेभिरिति ऋक्प्रतीकम् ।)

अग्निः ।	the sacrificial fire-god;
पूर्वेभिः उत नूतनैः ऋषिभिः ।	by the sages who were ancient and who are contemporary; उत may also mean आगामिभिरपि "in future also".
ईड्यः ।	is praise-worthy; has been eulogized.
सः ।	he (Agni)
आ वक्षति ।	brings along, carries hither.
देवान् ।	the gods (who are receivers of our offerings)
इह ।	to this place of sacrifice.

अग्निः ।	अग्र्यन्तर्गताध्यात्मगताग्निनामकहरिः ॥
पूर्वेभिः ।	पूर्वैः; अतीतैः ।
नूतनैः ।	नवशब्दस्य नु इत्यादेशः । ननूस्तत्ययश्च । (नूशब्दो अद्यपर्यायः । ततः सायंचिरमिति तनः ।) इदानीन्तनैः, अस्माभिरपि; वर्तमानैः अद्यतनैः ।
ऋषिभिः ।	ऋ ऋष् (गतौ) → ऋषिः
ईड्यः ।	स्तुत्यः । (ईड स्तुतौ; इत्यस्मात् कर्मणि ण्यत् । cf. ऋहलोर्ण्यत् । Pāṇini 3,1,124). ईडितुं योग्यः ।
देवाऽ।	देवान् । अन्यान् इन्द्रादीन् देवान् ।

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एह । आ + इह । √इदं, its locative form अस्मिन् । इदमोहः । (Pāṇini 5,3,11 and इश् आदेश for इदं । इदमइश् ॥ 5,3,3)

आ वक्षति । वह् + स + ति । √वह प्रापणे + छन्दसलृट् । स्यतासी लृलुटोः । (Pāṇini 3,1,33); ह् in the root → ढ (होढः ।, Pāṇini, 8,2,31); then → क (षढोः कःसि ।, (Pāṇini 8,2,41) → वक् सति (स → ष) = वक्षति ॥ आनयेत् । वहतिनयत्योः प्रापणार्थत्वात् ॥

II

ADHI-DAIVA

Like in the previous mantra, in this mantra also Agni is the deity referred to (parokshạ-kṛta). Other gods are also suggested by the word 'devān', accompanying Agni.

III

ADHYĀTMA

Ānanda-tīrtha summarizes the import of this mantra :

सपूर्वैर्नूतनैरप्यैर्विज्ञानादृषिनामकैः ।
ईड्यो देवादिभिः सर्वैः स च देवान् इहानयेत् ॥

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Jayatīrtha suggests that the intention of the mantra is to indicate that there is a long custom or tradition concerning the praise-worthiness of Agni (आचारोप्यस्तीत्युच्यते ।). That is why the sage-seer recounts that the sage-seers of ancient and bygone days eulogized Agni, and even so the sage-seers of contemporary times.

However, Agni is not merely the sacrificial fire personified, but also Vishṇu (viz. the Supreme Spirit, Brahman) who dwells in this fire as the inner director. (*Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā,* सोऽग्निस्तद्गतः अध्यात्मगतः हरिश्च ॥).

And this Agni is praised by all the sages who are endowed with especial or direct understanding of the Supreme Spirit and hence described as sage-seers (*ibid.*, सर्वैःऋषिभिः विज्ञानाद्विशिष्टज्ञानवत्त्वात् ऋषिनामकैः ॥ from ऋष ज्ञाने ।). The expression vi-jñāna indicates experiential knowledge, in contradistinction to jñāna, which is sensory, and scriptural knowledge. The sage-seers (ṛshis) have this variety of direct knowledge of reality, which distinguishes them from others. All the sage-seers, irrespective of period of time, are always committed to this reality (here Agni and the Godhead within that deity), which they have directly experienced. Hence they adore Agni (īḍyah), for he is the one reality worthy of adoration (īḍitum yogyah).

His relevance has been indicated by his bringing 'here' (iha) all the gods (devān). 'Here' in the context of external sacrificial ritual refers to the place of sacrifice. But sacrificial ritual is more importantly internal (āntara, adhyātma), carried on within ones own body. So 'here' means "in this body"

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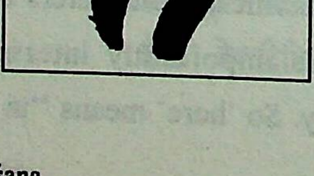
(asmin śarīre). And the 'gods' here mean the deities presiding over the sensory and mental functions (devas, for they illumine objects indriyābhimānino devān). But these deities are always present in the body; where is the question of their being "brought" (ā vakshati, āvahati) ? They are 'brought here' in the sense of their especially facilitating and favouring the development of correct knowledge and devotion to Godhead.

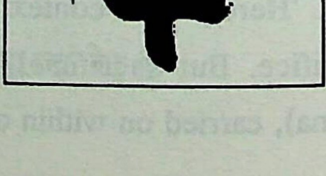
तेषां स्तावकानां ऋषीणां सम्बन्धिनि बाह्ययज्ञे देवान् हविर्भुजः हविर्भोजनार्थम् आनयतु । ज्ञानयज्ञे तु इन्द्रियदेवान् । सदा विद्यमानत्वेऽपि तेषामनयनं नाम ज्ञानभक्त्यादि विशेषोपकारकत्वमेव इत्याशयः ।

(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā-vivṛti)

The idea of the sage-seer is that Agni (the deity and the Godhead) should render the sense-organs and mind capable of providing spiritual knowledge (विशेषोपकारिणः करोतु ।)

* * * *





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अग्निः ।	the deity and the Supreme Spirit dwelling in the deity; and also in the body.
पूर्वेभिः उत नूतनैः ऋषिभिः ।	by all the sage-seers, the especial knowers of the Real or seekers of Truth. The ṛshi here signifies also the deities presiding over sense-functions.
ईड्यः ।	praise-worthy; merits adoration.
सः ।	He (that deity and the Supreme Spirit dwelling in it, as well as in the body).
आ वक्षति ।	brings together (so that they facilitate knowledge and devotion); constantly bears (वह् + स + ति), where स has frequentative force.
देवान् ।	the deities presiding over the sense-functions.
इह ।	in the body (in jñāna-yajña).

अग्निः ।	देवता, तदन्तर्गत विष्णुः । अग्निनियामकाग्निशब्दवाच्यपरमेश्वररूपः । शरीरगतेश्वररूपः ॥
पूर्वेभिः उत नूतनैः ऋषिभिः ।	सर्वैः । विज्ञानाद्विशिष्टज्ञानवत्त्वादृषिनामकैः देवादिभिः ॥
ईड्यः ।	स्तुत्यः । ईडितुं योग्यः ॥
सः ।	अग्निः ॥ तद्गतः प्रसिद्धाग्निगतः विष्णुः ॥
आ वक्षति ।	आ इत्युपसर्गस्य व्यवहिताश्चेति व्यवहितेन वक्षतीत्याख्यातेन सम्बन्धः ॥ व्यवहितेन इति सूत्रेणान्वयः ॥

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देवान् । (ज्ञानयज्ञे) इन्द्रियदेवान् । श्रोत्रं चक्षुः स्पर्शनं चँ रसनं घ्राणमेव च ।
अधिष्ठाय मनश्चायं विषयानुपसेवते ।। *(Padārtha-prakāśikā)*
तेषां आनयनं ज्ञानयज्ञे विशेषोपकारिण इति । *(ibid.)*
इन्द्रियदेवानां सदा विद्यमानत्वेऽपि तेषामानयनं नाम ज्ञानभक्त्यादि-विशेषोपकारकत्वम् । *(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā-vivṛti)*

इह । अस्मिन् शरीरे । ज्ञानयज्ञे ।

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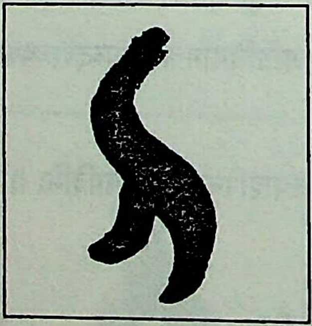

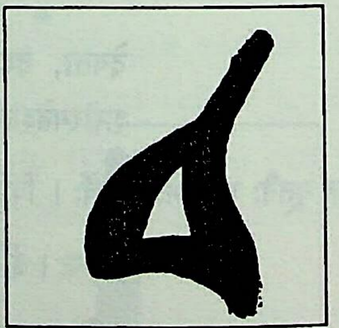

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(3)

(संहितापाठः ।)

अग्निनां रयिमंश्नवत्पोषमेव दिवे दिंवे ।
यशसं वीरवंत्तमम् ॥३॥

(पदपाठः ।)

अग्निनां । रयिम् । अश्नवत् । पोषम् । एव । दिवेऽदिंवे ।
यशसंम् । वीरवंत्ऽतमम् ॥

(अन्वयः ।)

अग्निना दिवेदिवे पोषमेव रयिं यशसं वीरवत्तमं अश्नवत् ॥

I

ADHI-YAJÑA

अभिप्लवषडहस्य मध्यवर्तिषूक्थ्येषु तृतीयसवने मैत्रावरुणस्याग्रे यं यज्ञमित्यादिको वैकल्पिकोऽनुरूस्तृचः । (आश्वलायने ७,८)

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(Sāyaṇa)

योऽयं होत्रा स्तुत्योऽग्निस्तेनाग्निना निमित्तभूतेन यजमानः। रयिं धनं। अश्नवत् प्राप्नोति। कीदृशं रयिम् ? दिवे दिवे पोषमेव पुष्यमाणतया वर्धमानमेव। न तु कदाचिदपि क्षीयमाणाम्। यशसं दानादिना यशो युक्तम्। वीरमत्तमं अतिशयेन पुत्रभृत्यादिवीरपुरुषोपेतम्। सति हि धने पुरुषाः सम्पद्यन्ते ॥

The praise here takes the form of describing Agni as helpful in our obtaining (aśnavat) wealth (rayim) that only flourishes, increases (posham eva), day by day (dive-dive), along with celebrity (renown, fame, yasśasam) and exceedingly valorous children or attendants (vīravattamam) (cf. 8,23,21).

The benefits of a sacrifice are recounted here. Wealth (rayi) is material wealth (dhanam, rāyah) which does not perish or attenuate, but increases and flourishes (posham)

cf. 1,125,1 रायस्पोषेण सचते सुवीरः।

2,21,6 पोषं रयीणामरिष्टिं तनूनाम्।

8,23,21 भूरि पोषं स धत्ते वीरवद्यशः।

8,59,7 रायस्पोषं यजमानेषु धत्तम्।

प्रजां पुष्टिमस्मासु धत्तम्॥

9,66,1 दधद्रयिं मयि पोषम्।

(the expresssion धत्तम् is Vedic; it means ददाति 'gives')

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The celebrity here is in terms of being a generous donor of gifts to the priests during sacrificial sessions. But it makes sense to take 'yaśas' along with 'rayi' and 'vīravattam' (see later).

(अग्निना रयिमिति ऋक्प्रतीकम् ।)

अग्निना । Through the grace of the sacrificial deity, Agni (devatā) only (eva)

रयिम् । wealth

अश्नवत् obtains

पोषमेव । (wealth) which only flourishes, and does not decrease

दिवेदिवे । day by day; ever

यशसम् । (obtains also) celebrity (for giving gifts)

वीरवत्तमम् । (and) a host of exceedingly brave followers

(Agni is praised here for the benefits he confers on the sacrificer)

अग्निना । होत्रा स्तुत्येनाग्निना (निमित्तभूतेन) । तत्प्रसादेन । स्तुतेनैव ।

रयिम् । धनम् (मघमित्यादिधननामसु पाठात् । √रि गतौ ।

अश्नवत् । प्राप्नोति । (अश्नोतेर्धातोः अशूव्याप्तौ । व्याप्तिकर्मणः ।) विशेषेणाप्तिः ।

पोषमेव । पुषेर्घञ् । पुष्यमाणतया वर्धमानम् । प्राप्तस्य तस्य वित्तस्य । पुष्टिमेव प्राप्नोति । न तु लोकवर्द्धीनताम् ।

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दिवेदिवे । प्रतिदिनम् । नित्यम् ।

यशसम् । यशः च ।

वीरवत्तमम् । वीरः पुत्रः, सोऽस्मिन्नस्तीति वीरवत् । तमपोर्थः अतिशयेन वीरवत् । वीरवत्तमं पुत्रेण संयुक्तम् । सम्यग् युक्तम् ।

(अभीष्टदातृत्वाच्चग्नेः स्तुतिर्युक्ता ।)

II

ADHI-DAIVA

Again, Agni is the deity praised here.

III

ADHYĀTMA

Ānanda-tīrtha suggesting the spiritual interpretation of the mantra which alone is relevant (अध्यात्ममेवेदं तदर्थकथनं युक्तम् । *Padārtha-prakāśikā),* summarizes the import

तेनैव रयिमाप्नोति वित्तं विद्याधनात्मकम् ।
दिवसे दिवसे नित्यं पुष्टिमेव न हीनताम् ।
यशश्च पुत्रसंयुक्तं वीर्यवत्तममेव वा ॥

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The wealth (rayim) that is obtained by him who praises due to Agni's grace is of two types : external (material) and internal (of the nature of knowledge)

तेनैवग्निना तत्प्रसादेन स्तोता रयिं बाह्ये धनात्मकं, अध्यात्मं विद्यात्मकं वित्तं अश्नवदाप्नोति ॥ *(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā)*

रयिं बाह्ययज्ञे धनात्मकं, अध्यात्मं ज्ञानाख्यं वित्तम् । *(Mantrārtha-mañjarī)*

अग्रेः स्तुत्यत्वे बाह्ये अध्यात्मं च धनादि प्रापकत्वरूपं निमित्तं कथ्यते । बाह्ये धनात्मकं प्रसिद्धहिरण्यात्मकम् ।

Celebrity (yaśasam) is not necessarily associated with generosity or gifts. One who has spiritual wealth gets renown and becomes a model. It goes naturally with the next mentioned benefit, derived from praising Agni (who is the lord inhering in the body, शरीरान्तर्गतेश्वररूपः ।), 'vīravattamam'. The interpretation that it consists of procuring brave children is irrelevant in the context (अध्यात्ममेवेदं तदर्थकथनं युक्तम् ।) (पुत्रलाभस्य अग्निप्रसादफलत्वायोगात् ।) *(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā-vivṛti).* Vira means 'vīrya', power, energy, strength. In its superlative degree it means renown, knowledge and happiness of the highest order.

अध्यात्मं वीरशब्दो भावप्रधानः । वीरवत्तमं यशो वीर्यवत्तमं ज्ञानं सुखं च । एवेति बाह्यपुत्रादिव्यावृत्तौ ॥ *(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā)*

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वीरपदं भावप्रधानं कृत्वा वीर्यवत्तमं यशो ज्ञानं सुखं च अश्नवदिति अध्यात्ममर्थे ज्ञेयः ॥ *(Mantrārtha-mañjarī)*

वीरशब्दो वीरत्वापरपर्यायवीर्यपरः। वीरत्ववीर्यशब्दयोरेकार्थत्वं द्रष्टव्यम्। ज्ञानं सुखं चेति यशःशब्दार्थकथनम्। *(Padārtha-prakāśikā)*

The word yaśas means etymologically knowledge and happiness. *(Padārtha-dīpikā)* provides this justification: "ya" means "to go", "to know"; and 'śa' means happiness.

ज्ञानं सुखं चेति यशब्दस्य गत्यर्थधातुजत्वेन शशब्दस्य शंशब्दपर्यायत्वेन च यश इत्यस्य ज्ञानं सुखं चेति व्याख्यानमुचितमेवेति भावः ॥

Further, *Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā-vivṛti* offers another interesting adhyātma interpretation for all the three benefits (rayi, yaśa and vīra-vattama) from Agni together :

ज्ञानं सुखं चेति। या प्रापणे कप्रत्ययः प्राप्त्यर्थानां ज्ञानार्थत्वात् यं ज्ञानं शं सुखं। यं च शंचेति द्वन्द्वात्समासान्ता इति बहुवचनात्समासान्ते डसि यश इति रूपम् ॥

वीर्यवत्तमं ज्ञानमपरोक्षम्। तादृशं सुखं मौक्तम्। परोक्षज्ञानस्य विद्याशब्देन गृहीतत्वात्। व्यवस्थित इति। द्रव्यपुत्रकीर्तिप्राप्तिः बाह्याग्नि-तद्गतविष्णुप्रसादेनैव ॥

रयिशब्दोक्त परोक्षज्ञानं अपरोक्षज्ञानं मुक्तिसुखं च अध्यात्मगत-विष्णुप्रसादेनैवेति व्यवस्थितो विकल्प इत्यर्थः ॥

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The meaning of 'rayi' (wealth) is knowledge that is indirect (derived from scripture, sensory avenues and reasoning) (vidyā, viz. paroksha-jñāna). The word 'vīr(y)a-vattama' signifies direct, experiential knowledge (aparoksha-jñāna). And 'yaśa' means happiness (bliss of liberation, sukha) through knowledge, which comes only as a result of divine grace, and this grace is from the Godhead that dwells in ones body (hence adhyātma-gata).

अग्निना एव । By Agni alone (viz. by the Supreme Spirit dwelling in Agni)

रयिम् । wealth of the nature of knowledge (indirect)

अश्नवत् । obtains

पोषम् । increase, growth

दिवेदिवे । ever, daily

यशसम् । knowledge and happiness (य and श)

वीरवत्तमम् । experiential (direct) knowledge; realization; bliss of liberation

आग्निना एव । तेनैव । तत्प्रसादेन । तदन्तर्गतहरिणा । अध्यात्मगतविष्णुप्रसादेनैव ।

रयिम । अध्यात्मं विद्यात्मकं वित्तम् । परोक्षज्ञानम् ।

अश्नवत् । प्राप्नोति । अशू व्याप्तौ । अश्नोतेरिति कर्मक्रियाव्याप्तिकर्मणः व्याप्त्यर्थकात् ।

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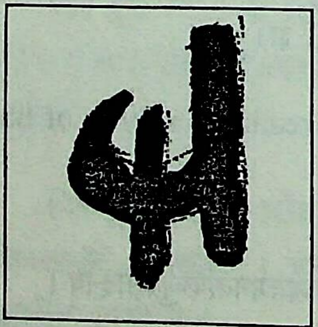
पोषम् । प्राप्तस्य वित्तस्य पुष्टिम् । पुषेर्घञ् ।

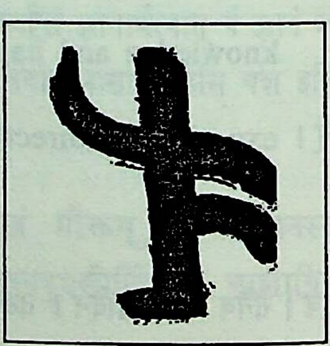
दिवेदिवे । नित्यम् ।

यशसम् । यशः । यशः कीर्तिश्च । ज्ञानं सुखं च । प्रापणार्थकयाधातुजस्य येत्यस्य ज्ञानार्थत्वात् शकारस्य (शं) सुखवाचित्वात् ।

वीरवत्तमम् । वीर्यवत्तमम् । ज्ञानमपरोक्षम् । तादृशं सुखं मौक्तम् ।

* * * *





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(4)

(संहितापाठः ।)

अग्ने॒ यं य॒ज्ञम॑ध्व॒रं वि॒श्वतः॑ परि॒ भूरसि॑
स इद्दे॒वेषु॑ गच्छति ॥४॥

(पदपाठः ।)

अग्ने॑ । यम् । य॒ज्ञम् । अ॒ध्व॒रम् । वि॒श्वतः॑ । प॒रि॒ऽभूः । असि॑ ॥
सः । इत् । दे॒वेषु॑ । ग॒च्छ॒ति॒ ॥

(अन्वयः ।)

(हे) आग्ने, (त्वं) अध्वरं यं यज्ञं विश्वतः परिभूः असि, स इत् देवेषु गच्छति ॥

I

ADHI-YAJÑA

Āśvalāyana-śrauta-sūtra (7,8) enjoins that this mantra (and two mantras that follow) must be recited during the eventide of 'tṛtīya-savana', when the ukthya-mantras associated with Abhiplava-shaḍaha sacrifice :

अग्निं वो वृधन्तमग्ने यं यज्ञमध्वरम् ॥

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(Sāyaṇa)

हे अग्ने। त्वं। यं यज्ञम्। विश्वतः सर्वासु दिक्षु। परिभूः परितः प्राप्तवानसि। स इत् स एव यज्ञः। देवेषु। तृप्तिं प्रणेतुम्। स्वर्गे गच्छति। प्राच्यादि चतुर्दिगन्तेषु आवहनीय-मार्जालीय-गार्हपत्याग्नीध्रीयस्थानेषु अग्निरस्ति। परि शब्देन होत्रीयादि धिष्ण्यव्याप्तिः विवक्षिता ॥

कीदृशं यज्ञम्? अध्वरं हिंसारहितम्। न हि अग्निना सर्वतः पालितं यज्ञं राक्षसादयो हिंसितुं प्रभवन्ति ॥

In the mantra, Agni is directly addressed (pratyaksha-kṛta). He is eulogized as guarding the sacrificial session (yajñam) from all directions (paribhūrasi), by which act the ritual becomes free from violence (adhvara) (cf. dhvarati himsā-karma). The demons and other wicked adversaries will not be able to hurt those who are engaged in the ritual. As a result, that sacrifice alone (sa it) will reach (gachchhati) the gods in the heavens (deveshu).

The word adhvara means yajña, the sacrificial session, hence the name for the perforing priest, adhvaryu. Here, it is used to describe or qualify yajña.

(cf. The yajña is protected on all sides by the forms of Agni. Āhavanīya-agni in the East, Mārjālīya-agni in the West, Gārhapatya-agni in the South, and Āgnīdhrīya-agni in the North. Agni is therefore called विभूः, present in various forms : विभूरसि प्रवाहणो वह्निरसि हव्यवाहनः। *(Taittirīya-samhitā,* 1,3,3).

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Many names of Agni are given in the same text. Besides the names cited above, श्वात्रः । प्रचेताः । तुथः । विश्ववेदाः । उशिक् । कविः । अंघारिः । बम्भारिः । अवस्युः । दुवस्वान् । शुंध्यूः । मार्जालीयः । सम्राट् । कृशानुः । परिषद्यः । पवमानः । प्रतक्वा । नभःस्वान् । असंमृष्टः । हव्यसूदः । ऋतधामा । सुवर्ज्योतिः । ब्रह्मज्योतिः । सुवर्धामा । अजः । एकपात् । अहिर्बुध्नियः (अहिः । बुध्नियः ।). Agni is begged to protect the performer of sacrifice through these forms (पाहि माग्ने, पिपृहि मा, मा मा हिꣳसीः ॥). Protected thus alround by forms of Agni, the adversaries of the sacrifice or of the performer of the sacrifice will be able to do no harm. Therefore such a yajña becomes a-dhvara (bereft of violence).

अग्ने ।	O Agni, the sacrificial fire-god
यम् ।	that (refers to yajñam)
यज्ञम् ।	sacrificial session
अध्वरम् ।	which (reference to yajña) eschews violence; becomes devoid of harm from inimical forces
विश्वतः ।	from all sides (directions)
परिभूः असि ।	(you abide) surrounding (the sacrifice); (you protect) being alround in several forms
सः इत् ।	that (yajña) alone
देवेषु ।	to the gods (in the heaven); amidst the gods
गच्छति ।	goes; reaches; approaches.

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अग्ने । (सामन्त्रितम् । O Agni, Pāṇini, 2,1,48)

यम् यज्ञम् । पूर्वोक्तम् ।

अध्वरम् । न विद्यते ध्वरः अस्य । हिंसारहितम् । राक्षसादयो अग्निना पालितं यज्ञं हिंसितुं न प्रभवन्ति ।

विश्वतः । सर्वतः । अभितः । सर्वासु दिक्षु । प्राच्यादिचतुर्दिगन्तेषु आवहनीयमार्जालीय-गार्हपत्याग्नीध्रीयस्थानेषु । पञ्चम्यास्तसिल् । (६,१,१९८) ।

परिभूःरसि । परितः प्राप्तवानसि । परि + भूः । सर्वतः परिवृत्य भवसि । होत्रीयादिधिष्ण्य-व्याप्तिर्विवक्षिता । त्वं सर्वतः व्याप्तो भवसि ।

सः इत् । यज्ञः एव । (इत् = एव । निपातः अवधारणे ।)

देवेषु । स्वर्गे । देवानां मध्ये । (or देवान् आप्नोति)

गच्छति । (हविर्दातुम् ।) (तृप्तिं प्रणेतुम् ।) गन्तव्यं धाम प्राप्नोति ।

II

ADHI-DAIVA

Agni is here eulogized as a protector of the sacrifice. *Bṛhaddevatā* (1, 66-67) mentions three forms of Agni : Pavamāna (in atmosphere, midregion), Vanaspati (on earth), and Śuchi (in the celestial region, sky) (cf. *Taittirīya-samhitā,* 2,2,4 : Three forms Pavamāna, Śuchi, Pāvaka). If this is one account (by the priests, vipraih), another account (by the sages, ṛshibhih), mentions

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Agni (on earth), Jātavedas (in the midregion) and Vaiśvānara (in the celestial region)

इहैष पवमानोऽग्निर्मध्यमोऽग्निर्वनस्पतिः ।
अमुष्मिन्नेव विप्रैस्तु लोकेऽग्निः शुचिरुच्यते ॥ (६६)

इहाग्निभूतस्त्वृषिभिर्लोके स्तुतिभिरीळितः ।
जातवेदा स्तुतो मध्ये मध्ये स्तुतो वैश्वानरो दिवि ॥ (६७)

अग्निरस्मिन्नथेन्द्रस्तु मध्यतो वायुरेव च ।
सूर्यो दिवीति विज्ञेयास्तिस्र एवेह देवताः ॥ (६९)

एतासामेव माहात्म्यान्नामान्यत्वं विधीयते ।
तत्तत्स्थानविभागेन तत्र तत्रेह दृश्यते ॥ (७०)

तासामियं विभूतिर्हि नामानि यदनेकशः ।
आहुस्तासां तु मन्त्रेषु कवयोऽन्योन्ययोनिताम् ॥ (७१)

Although three forms of Agni are mentioned, these forms are really the three deities mentioned by Yāska (Agni on earth, Vāyu or Indra in the atmosphere, and Āditya in the sky) (*Nirukta*, 7,5, also Shaḍguru-Śishya on *Sarvānukramaṇi,* 2,8). cf. also *Atharva-veda,* 12,1,20: अग्निर्दिव आ तपति अग्नेर्देवस्य उरु अन्तरिक्षम् । अग्निं मर्तास इन्धते हव्यवाहं घृतप्रियम् ॥ All three forms therefore are really forms of Agni. They are named differently due to their different functions and different locations. Each form has a 'power' of its own (vibhūti), and they are derived from the 'majesty' (māhātmya) of the one Godhead. The names are many, because they manifest different aspects of

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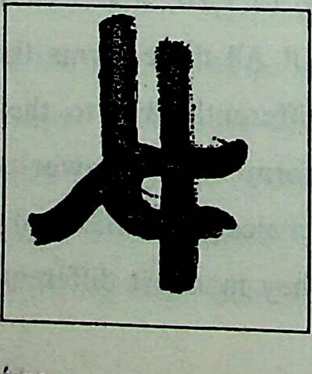
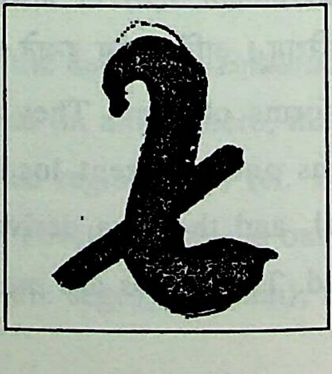
this majesty. *(Nirukta,* 7,5 तासां माहाभाग्यादेकैकस्या अपि बहूनि नामधेयानि भवन्ति ।). Each deity gets many names. The one Godhead (ātmā) has three aspects, and Agni is one of them; and Agni has three aspects (Pavamāna, Vanaspati and Śuchi; or Agni, Jātaveda and Vaiśvānara). Further, they are all so many forms of the sun (Sūrya). This is the significance of the words विश्वतःपरिभूरसि in the mantra.

While speaking about the three deities mentioned by Śākapūṇi and Yāska (*Nirukta,* 7,28, त्रेधाभावाय पृथिव्यामन्तरिक्षे दिवीति शाकपूणिः । cf. also 12,19). Durgāchārya explains the position : Agni on earth pervades whatever there is on earth, and establishes himself in each detail; so does the lightning in the midregion, as a form of Agni, and the sun in the sky, again as another form of Agni (on 12,19) :

पार्थिवोऽग्निर्भूत्वा पृथिव्यां यत्किञ्चिदस्ति तद्विक्रमते तदधितिष्ठति । अन्तरिक्षे विद्युदात्मना । दिवि सूर्यात्मना ॥

This is the import of the expression 'viśvatah paribhūr asi'.





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ADHYĀTMA

The first three stanzas of the hymn (tṛcha) were in the nature of justification for the praise of Agni (stuteh upapattih); now with the fourth stanza, the actual praise begins (stauti).

The Yajña mentioned here may be external (bāhya) or internal (āntara). The expression 'adhvara' is used along with 'yajña'. the conventional appraisal (rūḍhārtha) is that they are synonymous. But it must be noted that the two words are together used in the mantra, and separately. They are then not synonymous. At best, one must qualify the other: yajña distinguished by adhvaram. 'The ritualistic interpretation of 'adhvara' as harmless, devoid of violence or trickery (from ध्वृ हूर्छने, हिंसार्थकधातु, वधकर्मणि cf. *Nirukta,* 2,19); नास्ति ध्वरः हिंसनं कौटिल्यं वा यस्मिन् सोऽध्वरः।) appears farfetched.

The word etymologically signifies the sense of road, travel, journey (अध् गतौ विस्तारे च। अध्वन् + रा + कः upapada-samāsa; अध्वानं मार्गं राति ददानीति।). It may also be noted that in old literature the words 'adhvā' and 'adhvara' are used to mean atmosphere, space (आकाशार्थे प्रयोगः।) : the road that runs between the earth below and the sky above. Yajña is a road like this : it takes the mortal man (marta) to the state of immortality (amartya). It is only when we take adhvara in the sense of road, journey, travel or pilgrimage that the words देवेषु गच्छति becomes meaningful. Yajña is the road on which the pilgrim moves and reaches the gods. For instance, cf. RV 5,14,2

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तमध्वरेष्वीळते देवं मर्ता अमर्त्यम् ।
यजिष्ठ मानुषे जने ॥

The immortal Agni is praised (īḷate) by mortals in their pilgrimages (adhvareshu), in their travels to the higher realms; he is the supreme object of sacrifice. Another passage in Ṛgveda (5,4,8), Agni is begged to take this road (Yajña) for 'our' sake; he is in fact a resident of all three realms (earth, atmosphere and sky). Those who follow the lead of Agni (the netāra) will become well-settled among the gods (deveshu), and merit happiness

अस्माकमग्ने अध्वरं जुषस्व
सहसः सूनो त्रिषधस्थ हव्यम् ।
वयं देवेषु सुकृतः स्याम
शर्मणा सत्रिवरूथेन पाहि ॥

It is Agni's function to make ready this path of the gods that is filled with light, amidst the surrounding gloom (10,52,5) पथो देवयानम् ।

In fact, the devotees of yajña (jñāna-yajña) placed Agni first and foremost on this very road which takes them to the higher realms, and praised him during their travel on this road (4,7,1)

अयमिह प्रथमो धायि धातृभिर्होता
यजिष्ठो अध्वरेष्वीड्यः ॥

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Agni is worthy of praise (īḍya), worthy of adoration, for he is bristling with wisdom (vipra), and a great help on the road (5,1,7) :

प्रणु त्यं विप्रमध्वरेषु साधुमग्निं
होतारमीळते नमोभिः ॥

He carries our offerings to the gods above, and in this function he is a hotṛ; he also brings the gods above to the place of the ritual. He connects the mortal man with immortality. He makes the road which leads upwards (7,2,7) :

विप्रा यज्ञेषु मानुषेषु कारू
मन्ये वां जातवेदसा यजध्यै ॥
अर्ध्वं नो अध्वरं कृतं हवेषु
ता देवेषु वनथो वार्याणि ॥

This is a prayer addressed by the sage Vaśishṭha to the two divine ministrants (divyav hotārau) who officiate in sacrifices performed by humans (yajñeshu mānusheshu kārū). According to the Yāska, 'divyau hotārau' refers only to Agni (*Nirukta,* 8,12) cf. *Aitareya-brāhmaṇa* 6,4 यजति प्राणापानौ वै देव्या होतारा ।) The sage merely intends to praise and worship the gods (yajadhyai manye); the yajña is clearly a mental act. And even as they offer praises and worship (haveshu), there must be a road that leads them upwards (ūrdhvam adhvaram), and the divine ministrants who are all-wise (viprā jātavedasā) are begged to make this road for them (kṛtam, kuruta). In this

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passage, the two words adhvara and yajña are used, but in different senses. Yajña is what the humans perform; but the road is what the divine sages construct, so that the precious wealth of the gods may be shared by the humans (deveshu vāryāṇi vanathah).

Agni is hailed here (in the mantra we are considering), as elsewhere, as the maker of the path that takes us to the gods. Agni must therefore be approached (8,102,7) :

अग्निं वो वृधन्तमध्वराणां
पुरूतमम् ।
अच्छा नप्त्रे सहस्वते ॥

While approaching Agni with devotion (achchha), we must remember that he, the mighty one (sahasvate), and ever growing (vṛdhantam), assumes many forms on the roads that men take and most perfectly fills the roads with his presence (adhvarāṇām purūtamam). This stanza is what Yāska would describe as 'ādhyātmikya'; the deity is Agni, and the sage-seer is also a form of Agni.

There are also the expressions 'adhvarīyatām' and 'adhvarīyasi' used in Ṛgvedic passages. They refer to the ritual of making this abstract road, and to the holy journey that one undertakes on it. For insance, RV 4,9,5 :

वेषि ह्यध्वरीयतामुपवक्ता जनानां
हव्या च मानुषाणाम् ॥

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The mortal men who ceremoniously undertake this sacred journey (mānushāṇām janānām adhvarīyatām) are described as loved by Agni (veshi), who not only enlightens them but guides them (upavaktā). For Agni is the leader of human beings their travel (3,20,4 अग्निर्नेता भग इव क्षितीनाम्। cf. also 10,46,4 प्राश्वं यज्ञं नेतारमध्वराणाम्।). Another passage (6,2,10) :

वेषि ह्यध्वरीयमग्ने होता दमे विशाम्।
समृधो विश्वते कृणु जुषस्व हव्यमङ्गिरः॥

This road is made in the very homes of people (viśam dame), for Agni is the protector of people (viśpati), and makes them prosperous (samṛdhah kṛṇu) by accepting their offerings (havyam jushasva). Agni is described here as desirous of engaging in the ritual of road-making (adhvarīyam veshi) for the benefit of the people.

Yet another passage (2,1,2) speaks of Agni himself undertaking this ritual journey, along with those for whom he has made the road :

तव प्रशास्त्रं त्वमध्वरीयसि
ब्रह्मा चासि गृहपतिश्च नो दमे॥

This road is described as supreme but 'hidden' (4,5,12 गुहाध्वनः परमम्।) It is revealed to us by Agni, who knows and lets us know (1,71,7 वि नो वोचो जातवेदश्चिकित्वान्।). That the beneficent road is situate between the two realms, the middle (madhyame) and the upper (uttame), is indicated in a passage (3,17,5),

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यस्त्वद्धोता पूर्वो अग्ने यजीयान्
द्विता च सत्ता स्वधया च शम्भुः ।
तस्यानुधर्म प्र यजा चिकित्वोऽधा
नो धा अध्वरं देववीतौ ॥

The expression द्विता च सत्ता is explained as द्वेधं सत्ता मध्यमे च स्थाने उत्तमे च । This is the road which the gods delight in (adhvaram devavītau) for it provides them food (devānām vītih aśanam yatra). Agni is here asked to prepare the road for us (no dhāh, vidhehi).

The word for the chief priest in the sacrificial context, adhvaryu, is derived from adhvara. In a passage quoted above (2,1,2). Agni is described as having the forms of all the priests and discharging their functions. Adhvaryu is the principal priest (अध्वर्युर्वा ऋत्विजां प्रथमो युज्यते ।). He is the priest who measures and prepares the land, lays down the altar for the sacrificial fire, collects the faggots and the fuel, kindles the sacred fire, cleans the vessels, and purifies the material used in the ritual, cooks the food-offerings, and makes the ceremonial offering to the gods through the fire, all the while reciting the mantras from Yajurveda. In other words, he is the maker of the road for the gods to travel, or rather for the offerings to reach the gods. Yajña is in fact the ritual of road-making. Agni protects the road as well as the pilgrims on that road. And all the gods are established in Agni, as spokes of a wheel on the rim (5,13,6)

अग्ने नेमिरराँ इव देवाँस्त्वं परिभूरसि ।

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Note the expression 'paribhūr asi' here, which also figures in the stanza of the first hymn to Agni, we are now considering. It conveys the idea of Agni surrounding (encompassing, pervading) all the gods, so that they abide by the Order (ṛta). It is also thus that the gods made Agni the very hub or nave of immortality (3,17,4 'amrtasya nābhih').

Enough has already been said about how the words yajña and adhvara are not identical in import, and about the nuances of the word 'adhvara' in the Vedic context. (cf. 10,1,5, होतार चित्ररथमध्वरस्य यज्ञस्य ।) In almost every one of the passages in Ṛgveda where the word adhvara occurs, it is Agni who is the deity (devatā). Agni's association with adhvara is intimate, as the following passage (6,7,2) suggests :

नाभिं यज्ञानां सदनं रयीणाम्
महामाहाममभि सं नयन्त ।
वैश्वानरं रथ्यमध्वराणाम्
यज्ञस्य केतुं जनयन्त देवाः ॥

This yajña identified with Agni is the path of the gods (*Aitareya brāhmaṇa* 10,5) :

देवरथो वा एष यद्यज्ञः ।

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(अग्नेयंयज्ञमिति ऋक्प्रतीकम् ।)

अग्ने ।	the sacred fire; the spirit inherent in the fire; the Supreme Spirit abiding in the human being
यं यज्ञम् ।	that sacrifice in the nature of knowledge (jñāna-yajña); the internal sacrifice (āntara)
अध्वरम् ।	the holy road that leads mortal man to immortality
विश्वतः ।	all the time in every way
परिभूः असि ।	Thou (Agni) hast pervaded it
सः इत् ।	This (road) alone
देवेषु अधिगच्छति ।	leads towards the gods.
अग्ने ।	O अग्ने, तदन्तर्गतविष्णो, शरीरेऽश्वररूपेणावस्थित ।
यं यज्ञम् ।	ज्ञानयज्ञम् । (बाह्यमान्तरं च ।) अग्नेयं यज्ञं ।
अध्वरम् ।	विहितप्रकाराणेनानुष्ठितम् । अध्वनि मार्गे रतम् । अध्वशब्दोपपदाद् रमु क्रीडायामिति

धातोर्डप्रत्यये डित्वाट्टिभूतस्यामित्यस्य लोपे प्रत्ययाकार सम्बन्धे सति अध्वरेति रूपम् । यज्ञमिति विशेष्यवाचक शब्दसद्भावात् अध्वरमित्यस्य अध्वनि रतमित्यर्थः ॥ अध्वन् शब्दे उपपदे इमेः औणदिको ड प्रत्ययः । प्रत्ययस्य च डित्वात् धातोष्टिलोपः । अध्वन्शब्दनकारस्य 'नलोपः प्रातिपदकिन्तस्य ।' (८,३,७) इति लोपः सति चैवं अध्वरमिति रूपम् ॥

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विश्वतः ।	सदैव ।
परिभूः असि ।	परितो रक्षसि । अस् धातोः ।
स इत् ।	स एव ज्ञानयज्ञः । इच्छब्दस्यैवार्थत्वात् ।
देवेषु गच्छति ।	देवाः स्वीकुर्वन्ति । ज्ञानयज्ञस्य देवादिकं विषयीभवति । भगवद्रक्षितस्य यज्ञस्यैव देवान् प्रति गन्तृत्वम् ।

Ānanda-tīrtha paraphrāses the import of this stanza :

यं यज्ञं परितो भूत्वा रक्षसि त्वं सदैव च ।
विधिमार्गस्थितं देवान् स एवाप्नोत्यसंशयम् ।।४।।

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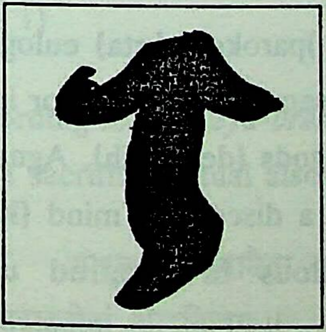

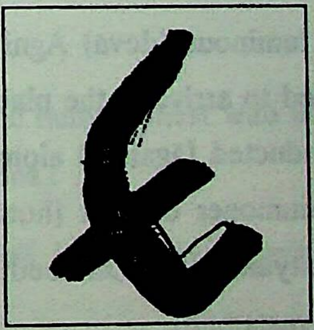

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(5)

(संहितापाठः ।)

अग्निर्होता कविक्रतुः सत्यश्चित्रश्रवस्तमः
देवो देवेभिरा गमत् ॥५॥

(पदपाठः ।)

अग्निः । होता । कविऽक्रतुः । सत्यः । चित्रश्रवःऽतमः ॥
देवः । देवेभिः । आ । गमत् ॥

(अन्वयः ।)

अग्निः होता कविक्रतुः सत्यः चित्रश्रवस्तमः देवः । देवेभिः आ गमत् ॥

The luminous (deva) Agni is indirectly)paroksha-kṛta) eulogized here and begged to arrive at the place where the sacrifice (external or internal) is being conducted (āgamat) along with other gods (devebhih). Agni is hailed as the summoner of light (hotā), wise with a discerning mind (kavikratu), truth (satyam) and exceedingly marvellous in inspired utterances (chitraśravastamah).

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I

ADHI-YAJÑA

(Sāyaṇa)

अयमग्निर्देवः अन्यैर्देवैः हविर्भोजिभिः सह । आगमत् अस्मिन्यज्ञे समागच्छतु । कीदृशोऽग्निः? होता होमनिष्पादकः । कविक्रतुः । कविशब्दोऽत्र क्रान्तवचनो मेधाविनाम । क्रतुः प्रज्ञानस्य कर्मणो वा नाम । ततः क्रान्तप्रज्ञः क्रान्तकर्मा वा । सत्यः अनृतरहितः, फलमवश्यं प्रयच्छतीत्यर्थः । चित्रश्रवस्तमः । श्रूयत इति श्रवः कीर्तिः । अतिशयेन विविधकीर्तियुक्तः ॥

Agni is described here as a 'hotṛ', which is obviously a priestly function (cf. 1,1,1 देवं ऋत्विजं होतारम् ।). Hotṛ is one who offers the sacrificial oblations and accomplishes the purpose of the ritual (homa-nishpādaka). Agni is requested here to arrive at the place of sacrifice, along with other gods (devebhih), for whom the offerings are meant. He is the invoker of the gods, the hotṛ in this sense also. He is identical with the priest who invokes the gods and offers them oblations (*Aitareya-brāhmaṇa,* 12,3, अग्निर्वै देवानां होताऽऽसीत् ।)

According to *Aitareya-brāhmaṇa* (1,2) the human priest who invokes the gods in a sacrificial ritual also offers oblations :

आहूतयो वै नामैता यदाहुतयः । एताभिर्वै देवान् यजमानो ह्वयति ।
तदाहुतीनां आहूतित्वम् ॥

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Technically, in a sacrificial ritual, hotṛ is one who only invokes the gods; another priest offers oblations. But one who invites the gods asks them also to partake of the offerings. He is thus both (*ibid.)*

तदाहुर्यदन्यो जुहोत्यथ योऽनु चाह यजति च कस्मात्तं होतेत्याचक्षते?
इति । यद्वाव स तत्र यथाभाजनं देवता अमुमावहामुमवहेत्यावाहयति तदेव
होतुर्होतृत्वं होता भवति । होतेत्येनमाचक्षते य एवं वेद ॥

He utters the name of the god for whom the offering is meant; this is called 'āhuti', offering the oblations. It is as good as making the offerings. In the spiritual sense, the very words which invite and invoke the gods is the hotṛ. The same text says (6,5) :

मनो वै यज्ञस्य मैत्रावरुणौ । वाग् यज्ञस्य होता ॥

Maitrā-varuṇa (also called prasthātā) is one of the three priests who are appointed to help the hotṛ-priest (other two being achchhāvāka and grāvastut). Who indeed invokes the particular gods at specific periods? It is the mind that functions like this helper-priest; and his voice making the invocation is the real hotṛ. Agni himself is the deva-hotṛ, for he invites and brings all the gods that are to receive oblations (*ibid.,* 5,2) :

अग्निर्वै देवानां होता ।

And being the hotṛ, the god is immortal, and he proceeds ahead of all the other gods; he also inspires the sacred acts and the sacred knowledge by his uncanny magical power (3,27,7)

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होता देवा अमर्त्यः पुरस्तादेति मायया
विदथानि प्रचोदयन् ॥

(The word विदथानि is taken by Yāska in the sense of both yajña and prajñā, cf. *Nirukta* 6,7. The word can be derived from 'dhā', "to keep", "to bear", and also from 'vid', "to know").

II

ADHI-DAIVA

Agni is described in this mantra (1,1,5) as 'kavikratu'. This needs some explanation. It is a compound of two words, 'kavi' and 'kratu'. Agni is often called a 'kavi' in the Ṛgvedic passages; and kavi in *Ṛgveda* is synonym for the sage (ṛshi), the wise person (vipra), the genius (manīshī). Yāska suggests that the word is formed from the root 'kram', which has the sense of "going beyond", "transcending", "striding across"; kavi is one who has the vision beyond the sense-faculties (krānta-darśana)

मेधावी कविः क्रान्तदर्शनो भवति कवतेर्वा ।

(*Nirukta,* 12,13)

The root-word 'kavate' signifies "going" (gamanārtha), and as all roots which have the meaning "to go" also have the meaning "to know" (jñānārthaka), the word means extraordinary knowledge (prajñā) (cf. *Nirukta* 3,13). Yāska also gives ritual act (karma) as the meaning of 'kavi'

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(cf. *ibid.,* 3,2), as also genius (manīshī, *Nirukta,* 3,15). The word may also be derived from the root 'kam' ("to shine", "to dazzle"), and mean "one whose intellect is dazzling, one whose vision is luminous (kānta-darśana). It is in this sense that we have

विश्वा रूपाणि प्रतिमुञ्चते कविः ॥

(RV. 5,81,2)

The kavi unfolds all forms in the universe. Further, the kavīs are those who can fathom the dark secrets of universal order and bear in their hearts the mysterious expressions of this truth (10,5,2) :

ऋतस्य पदं कवयो नि पान्ति
गुहा नामानि दधिरे पराणि ॥

A kavi is distinguished by his uncanny power to see things beyond the normal ken (atīndriya-vishaya-prajñopeta).

There is also the root 'ku' from which the word may be derived; it signifying "praising", "singing" (कु शब्दे । कौति कूयते वा कविः । अच इः । (उणादिसूत्रे ४,५७८) । इप्रत्यय in कर्त्रर्थे as well as in भावार्थे ।).

The expression 'kratu' by itself means "will", "purpose" (samkalpa) behind action (karma); it may also mean ritual act, viz. act done in seriousness with a deliberation and purpose in view. The usage in the Ṛgvedic

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passages emphasizes the factor of fixed determination (niśchaya-adhyavasāya), e.g. (2,12,1) :

> यो जात एव प्रथमो मनस्वान्
> देवो देवान् क्रतुना पर्यभूषत् ॥

The reference is to Indra, who had a mind of his own from his very birth, and who made the gods flourish with his firm resolve. Also (2,13,11) :

> सुप्रवाचनं तव वीर वीर्यं
> यदेतेन क्रतुना विन्दसे वसु ॥

This again refers to Indra who vanquished his enemies and snatched their treasure by his mighty will. Or again (7,90,5) :

> ते सत्येन मनसा दीध्यानाः
> स्वेन युक्तासः क्रतुना वहन्ति ॥

The exploites of Indra and Vāyu together are extolled here. The role of earnest thought which is also effective (satyena manasā dīdhyānā) in the firm resolve (kratu) is brought out here. Knowledge and will go together in the meaning of 'kratu'. It must also be noted that the word 'kratu' is related to cleansing the constitution before undertaking any act (2,5,4) :

> साकं हि शुचिना शुचिः प्रशास्ता क्रतुनाजनि ॥

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Now, the word kavikratu acquires a richness of meaning. It is employed in the Ṛgvedic passages often with reference to Agni, and sometimes to Soma.

रातिं भृगूणां उशिजं कविक्रतुम् ॥

(3,2,4)

तुभ्यं दक्ष कविक्रतो यानीमा ।

(3,14,7)

अग्निमीळे कविक्रतुम् ।

(3,27,12)

सीदद्धोता कविक्रतुः ।

(6,16,23)

इन्द्रं गच्छन् कविक्रतुः ।

(9,25,5)

The word in all these cases suggests the divine will inspired by extraordinary knowledge; it combines power with light – even as the fire does. The power is to project the world of names and forms, and the light is to lead the mortals beyond this world into immortality. The descriptions विश्वानि वयुनानि विद्वान् and जातवेद are in consonance with this. Agni is not merely hotṛ, but also 'kavikratu' : अग्निर्होता कविक्रतुः ।

He is also 'satya' (सत्यं ऋतं बृहत् ।). A passage where 'satya' occurs along with 'kavikratu' (7,90,5) has already been cited. Sāyṇa interprets this word as 'satya-karmā') in the sense that he renders all ritual acts effective and fruitful (phalam avaśyam prayachchhati); it can never be false (anṛta-rahita).

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However, this adhi-yajña approach is inadequate in the context. Yāska, for instance, explains that the primary significance of सत् is goodness (sādhu-bhāva) which is identical with truth or reality (*Nirukta,* 3,13) :

सत्यं कस्मात् ? सत्सु तायते सत्प्रभवं भवतीति वा ॥

It is called 'satya' because it spreads and pervades among the good-natured people, or it originates in good nature. The word also has many nuances. For instance, the expression in speech which is devoid of intention to hurt distinguishes 'satya' (3,14,6) :

अद्रोघेण वचसा सत्यमग्ने ॥
(अद्रोघेण = द्रोहरहितेन पापशून्येन ।)

The magical formulae which are also in conformity with what is real will be capable of supporting the earth and upholding the worlds above (1,67,3) :

अजो न क्ष्मां दाधार पृथिवीं तस्तम्भ द्यौम्
मन्त्रेभिः सत्यैः ॥

Satya is more of a mental process; it is imbued with the power of the mind to create good things and to eliminate sins (1,73,2) :

देवो न यः सविता सत्यमन्मा
क्रत्वां निपाति वृजनानि विश्वा ।
पुरुप्रशस्तो अमतिर्न सत्य
आत्मेव शेवो दिधिषारयो भूत् ॥

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The passage is significant. It not only likens Agni to the rising sun, but describes him as the knower of truth (satya-manmā, Sāyaṇa, 'satya-jñānah', one in whose mind is truth or reality). By his resolute will (kratvā) he protects the world from all wickedness (viśvā vṛjanāni nipāti). He is widely eulogized (viz. praised as most excellent by all creatures, puru-praśastah). He is himself real and never otherwise (satyah, Sāyaṇa : 'bādha-rahitah'); he is like unto thoughtlessness (viz. not disturbed by the thoughts of human beings, amatir na). Sāyaṇa explains 'amati' as the name of form (rūpanāmaitat), on the strength of *Nirukta* (3,13). Skanda-svāmin takes 'amati' in the sense of 'having his own mind, and not swayed by the minds of others' (ātma-matir amatir-uchyate), or as synonymous with the ever moving sun (gamana-śilo ādityah, ama gatyādishu, tadvat). Skanda-svāmin's suggestion that Agni is 'ātma-mati' may also mean that Agni is distinguished by self-knowledge. This is strengthened by the subsequent expression 'ātmeva śevah', originating happiness like ones own self.

The word 'satya-mannam' as descriptive of Agni is interesting. 'Manma' is mental functioning (mananam). It is derived from the root mana, "jñāne" (अन्येभ्योऽपि दृश्यन्ते, Pāṇini, 3,2,75 → मनिन् प्रत्ययः ।). It is usually explained as सत्यं अवितथं मन्म यस्य सत्यमन्मा ।).

In another passage, Agni as 'satya' is identified with the Sun, who is "the light resting in darkness" (3,39,5) :

सत्यं तदिन्द्रो दशभिर्दशग्वैः
सूर्यं विवेद तमसि क्षियन्तम् ॥

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We have seen that *Bṛhaddevatā* also regards Sūrya as one with Agni, and that as ātman.

Yet another passage expands 'satya' into 'satyadharmā', "of the nature of satya" on the road that leads upwards (1,12,7) :

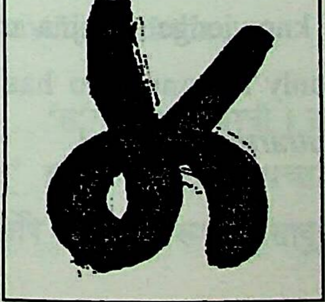
कविमग्निमुपस्तुहि सत्यधर्माणमध्वरे ॥

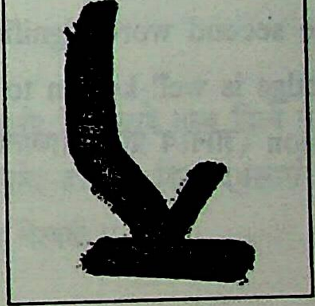
Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa (9,5,1,13) relates that the gods gave up what was false and stuck firmly with the real :

ते देवा उत्सृज्यानृतं सत्यमन्वालेभिरे ॥

Giving up the false is rising above the unreal world and taking to the road that leads from the unreal to the ral (adhvara) (cf. previous mantra).

Further, Agni is hailed as 'chitra-śravastama', "most celebrated for his various qualities." Sāyaṇa explains : श्रूयते इति श्रवः कीर्तिः । अतिशयेन विविधकीर्तियुक्तः ॥





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III

ADHYĀTMA

Agni is called hotṛ here, because he functions like a divine summoner of all the gods (āhvāna-kartā, āhvātā) for the sacrificial ritual that is internal (antar-yajña or jñāna-yajña). He is also a performer of the offerings of oblations (homa-nishpādaka) in this internal sacrifice. He is the one who inspires the human hotṛ-priest (होतृप्रेरकतया विशिष्य होतरि स्थितत्वेन ।), and dwells in him (होतृसंस्थं विशेषतः ।).

Ānanda-tīrtha summarizes the mystical import of this mantra :

सोऽखिलग्रहणप्रज्ञः सद्गुणैः सन्ततोऽखिलम् ।
यमयत्यग्र्यकीर्तीनामुत्तमो विबुधैः सह ।
आगन्ताऽखिलभक्तानां पूजास्वीकारतत्परः ।

Jayatîrtha explains that Agni is called 'kavikratu' because he has extraordinary will and wisdom in order to know all things (कवित्वेऽखिलग्रहणे सर्वज्ञानाय क्रतुः प्रज्ञा यस्यासौ कविक्रतुः ।). The first word in the compound (kavi) means knowledge of everything (sarva-vishayaka-jñāna, Rāghavendra-tīrtha); and the second word signifies intuitional knowledge (prajña or pratibhā). Knowledge is well-known to be possible only for one who has this insight and vision (ज्ञानस्य प्रतिभासाध्यत्व प्रसिद्धिः । *Mantrārtha-mañjari).*

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The word 'kavi' is usually used to describe a poet; and the poet is distinguished by his uncommon wisdom concerning things around him; and the word 'kratu' has "life" and "intellect with insight" as its synonyms included under 'prajñā' (काव्यकरे सूरौ इत्यभिधानात् कविर्विज्ञानी । क्रतुरसुर्धीरिति प्रज्ञानामसु पाठात् क्रतुः प्रज्ञा । *ibid.).*

The word 'kratu' is derived from an old root 'kra', meaning "to divide", "to analyse", "to shape", "to do or work" (kṛ). Hence Sri Aurobindo is right when he takes the word in the sense of discerning mind (prajñā).

Agni's description as 'satya' signifies not only his being brimming with all auspicious qualities (सत् । सद्भिर्गुणैस्ततः ।), but his power over them as the regulator of all things and events (यः । नियामकः । अखिलं विश्वं यमयति ।). The word 'satya' is taken here as composed of two units सत् and यः (सच्चासौ यश्चेति सत्यः ।). Jayatīrtha explains :

> सद्भिर्गुणैस्ततः सन्ततोऽखिलं विश्वं यमयतीति । सद्भावे साधुभावे चेति वचनात् (गीतायां १७,२६) सच्छब्दः गुणवाची । सदुपपदात् तनोतेः क्विप् प्रत्ययो डिच्च । यमेश्च डः । सच्चासौ यश्चेति सत्यः । यमयतीति स्वार्थे णिच् ॥

Also Rāghavendra-tīrtha :

> 'स'च्छब्दो गुणवाची । तनु विस्तारे इति धातोः क्विप्प्रत्यये तस्य डित्वे च 'त्' इति व्याप्तवाची । यच्छति नियमयतीति यमेः डप्रत्यये डित्वादभस्यापि टेर्लोपे 'य' इति रूपम् । साधुगुणव्याप्तो नियन्ता चेत्यर्थः ॥

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Padārtha-prakāśikā, subscribing to the above derivation of the word 'satya' (सत् + त् + य इति पदत्रयमभिप्रेत्य ।), adds that only the qualities of the Supreme Spirit can be considered as auspicious (भगवद्गुणा एव च साधवः इति भावः ।). And Satyanātha-yati takes the 'auspicious qualities' of the Supreme Spirit to be illustrated by creation and maintenance of the world as well as its withdrawal into himself.

सद्भिः गुणैः सृष्टिकर्तृत्वादिधर्मैः सद्भावे सत्त्वे साधुः समीचीनो भावधर्मः ।
तत्र च सदित्येतत् प्रयुज्यते ॥

(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā-vivṛti)

'Chitra-śravastamam' is another description of Agni in this mantra. Ānanda-tīrtha's interpretation of the word as referring to the superiority of Agni (of Vishṇu who inheres in him) among the persons who are eulogized as first and foremost is explained by Jayatīrtha (अग्रय कीर्तीनां पुरुषाणां मध्ये उत्तमः ।). The fame of Agni is marvellous and manifold, and most exceedingly so (चित्रं अद्भुतं श्रवः कीर्तिः यस्यासौ । अतिशयेन ।). Sri Aurobindo sees the word 'śrava' as synonymous with 'śruti'; inspired words or revelation. It is not fame, according to him, but knowledge gained by supramental faculties. It is worth considering, although 'śruti' may not go meaningfully with 'chitra', nor with the superlative suffix.

This luminous spirit, Agni (viz. the Supreme Spirit) is invoked to appear in the jñāna-yajña (ā gamat), along with the gods (viz. the deities responsible for sense-functions, इन्द्रियाभिमानिनो देवाः ।), for their participation in the jñāna-yajña is indispensable. The place where they are to appear is the devotee's

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own body (bhakta-śarīra), for it is there that jñāna-yajña takes place. Agni becomes proximate, close at hand, and this is especially relevant here. Jayatīrtha explains :

देवेभिः बुधैर्यज्ञभुग्भिः इन्द्रियाभिमानिभिश्च देवैः सह। यज्ञस्थानं भक्तशरीरं च। प्रत्यागमत् आगन्ता भवति। तत्र च विशेषतः सन्निहितो भवति। अखिलभक्तानां बाह्याध्यात्मिकपूजास्वीकारतत्परः सन् इति शेषः ॥

Relevant here is an interesting observation we find in *Taittirīya-samhitā* (6,1,1,2) :

अन्तर्हितो हि देवलोको मनुष्यलोकात् ॥

The world of the gods is indeed included in the world of mortal human beings. The gods are all located inside and outside us. The gods are those who illumine (deva, dīpanāt) the objects of the world for us, viz. sense-organs. Our sense-functions and our mind are indeed the devas (indriyābhimāni-devas). They are of the nature of light or knowledge.

But approaching of Agni (and the Supreme Spirit abiding in Agni) and other gods is not for the sake of partaking of the oblations offered, but it is out of love for the devotee that they arrive (*ibid.*)

आगमनं न हविराद्याशया। किन्तु भक्तप्रियतयेति भावः ॥

The attribute of Agni detailed above all lead to this.

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(अग्निर्होतेति ऋक्प्रतीकम्)

अग्निः ।	(As before)
होता ।	the summoner of the other gods in this jñāna-yajña
कविक्रतुः ।	will or deliberation accompanied by extraordinary wisdom
सत्यः ।	most true, beneficent, auspicious and controller.
चित्रश्रवस्तमः ।	most rich in marvellous celebrity; inner vision or prompting that is manifold
देवः ।	the luminous spirit (Agni)
देवेभिः ।	the deities of sense-functions
आ गमत् ।	may come hither (to the body of the performer of jñāna-yajña.

अग्निः ।	प्रसिद्धाग्निः, तदन्तर्गतविष्णुरूपः, शरीरगतेश्वररूपश्च ।
होता ।	ज्ञानयज्ञे होमनिष्पादकः अन्तर्यज्ञनिष्पादकः । अह्वाता । होत्रप्रेरकतया विशिष्य होतरि स्थितः ।
कविक्रतुः ।	प्रतिभा (प्रज्ञा) साध्य ज्ञानवान् । मेधावी कविःक्रान्तदर्शनो भवति कवतेर्वा (*Nirukta* 12,13). कुशब्दे कौति कूयते वा कविः (अच इः । उणादि. ४,५७८) । √क्रम् क्रान्तदर्शने । √कम् कान्तदर्शने । क्रतुः कर्मणि (*Nirukta* 3,2) प्रज्ञायाम् (*Nirukta* 3,13); अतीन्द्रियविषयप्रज्ञोपेतः । सर्वज्ञः । संकल्पात्मकः । ज्ञानसंकल्पः । सत्यदर्शी । सत्यदृष्टि संपन्नः ।

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सत्यः । सच्चासौ यश्चेति । यमयतीति । सत् (गुणवाची) + त् (व्याप्तवाची) + य (नियमयतीति) । साधुगुणव्याप्तो नियन्ता चेत्यर्थः । सद्भावे सत्त्वे साधुः समीचीनो भावो धर्मः । भगवद्गुणा एव साधवः ॥ सत्यमयः । सत्यस्वरूपः ।

चित्रश्रवस्तमः । चित्रं अद्भुतः श्रवः कीर्तिः यस्यासौ । अतिशयेन । अग्र्यकीर्तीनां पुंसां मध्ये उत्तमः ॥ अन्तःश्रवणं अन्तःप्रेरणा वा अद्भुता वैचित्र्यवैविध्ययुता । चित्राणि श्रवांसि अन्तःश्रवणानि यस्य सः चित्रश्रवाः, सर्वेषामतिशयेन चित्रश्रवस्तमः ॥

देवः । अग्निः द्योतनार्थः ।

देवेभिः । इन्द्रियाभिमानिभिः । बुधैः ज्ञानयज्ञभुग्भिः । सह ।

आ गमत् । आगच्छतु । यज्ञस्थानं भक्तशरीरं प्रत्यागमत् । आगन्ता भवति । तत्र विशेषतः सन्निहितो भवति । न हविराद्याशया, किन्तु भक्तप्रियतया । पूजास्वीकारतत्परः सन् ॥

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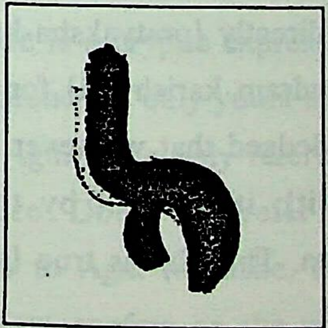 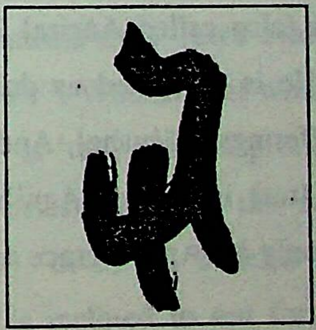

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(6)

(संहितापाठः ।)

य॒दङ्ग दा॒शुषे॒ त्वमग्ने॑

भ॒द्रं क॑रि॒ष्यसि॑

तवेत्तत्सत्यमं॑ङ्गिरः ॥६॥

(पदपाठः ।)

यत् । अ॒ङ्ग । दा॒शुषे॑ । त्वम् । अग्ने॑ । भ॒द्रम् । क॒रि॒ष्यसि॑ ॥
तव॑ । इत् । तत् । स॒त्यम् । अ॒ङ्गि॒रः॒ ॥

(अन्वयः ।)

अङ्ग अग्ने, त्वं दाशुषे यद् भद्रं करिष्यसि तत् तवेत् । (हे) अङ्गिरः, सत्यम् ॥

Agni (also called Aṅgira) is addressed directly (pratyaksha-kṛt) in this mantra. He is eulogized as doing good (bhadram karishyasi) for him who makes offerings (dāśushe). And it is acknowledged that whatever is offered to Agni (tat) is in fact Agni's own (tava it); it was got by the mortal devotee only by Agni's grace and benefaction. That this is true (satyam) is affirmed.

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I

अधियज्ञ

(Sāyaṇa)

अङ्ग इत्यभिमुखीकरणार्थो निपातः । अङ्ग अग्ने हे अग्ने । त्वम् । दाशुषे हविर्दत्तवते यजमानाय । तत्प्रीत्यर्थं यद् भद्रं वित्तगृहप्रजापशुरूपं कल्याणम् । करिष्यसि । तद् भद्रं । तवेत् तवैव । सुखहेतुरिति शेषः । हे अङ्गिरोऽग्ने । एतच्च सत्यं न तु अत्र विसंवादोऽस्ति । यजमानस्य वित्तादिसम्पत्तौ सत्यां उत्तरक्रत्वनुष्ठानेन अग्नेरेव सुखं भवति ॥

Agni is addressed (āmantraṇa, as if the deity stands in front of the sage-seer the force of the particle 'aṅga', which particle is meant to draw attention or to address, संबोधनार्थको निपातः). He is told that whatever (yat) benefit (bhadram, in the form of wealth, home, offsprings and cattle) he confers (karishyasi) upon the performer of the sacrifice (yajamāna), who offers oblations to Agni (dāśushe), that (benefit) is only his (tavet). It causes Agni happiness. This is the bare truth (satyam), and there is no doubt or argument about it.

There is a cryptic expression in the mantra, 'tavet' (tava eva), meaning "yours alone", "only yours and no one else's". What is that which belongs only to Agni? The only reference to 'tavet' is 'tat', again a pronoun which is obscure. Does "it" refer to what the priest offers in the sacrifice as oblations to Agni (dāśushe, from दाशृ दाने ।), or to the benefits (bhadram) which Agni confers on the priest? Sāyaṇa is inclined to opt for the latter,

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but qualifies that the pleasure of bestowing the benefits is Agni's. When Agni provides the priest with plenty and prosperity, the priest will make more sacrificial offerings to Agni, to the obvious delight of Agni. Agni's happiness increases. However, this interpretation seems irrelevant in the context. The sacrifice is resorted to for the benefits the mortal man receives from the gods, and even the attempt to please the gods is in expectation of the benefits the gods confer. No ritual is meant to make the gods happy for their own sake.

The better interpretation is to take 'tat' in the sense of that which the priest offers in the sacrifice. Whatever is offered is not really what belongs to the priest, or what he earnt by his own effort. All that the priest has, in order to offer, has come to him by the grace of Agni. So the priest is offering to Agni what is Agni's own. However, Agni is pleased with the offerings made, and appreciates the mental make-up which is behind the sacrificial offerings. He confers on the devotee further blessings.

Agni has earlier been referred to as a 'hotṛ'; the root 'hu' of the word means to give as well as to receive (दानादानयोः). Agni receives the oblations and gives benefits.

The sage-seer recognizes the greatness of Agni, and becomes aware of the truth (satya) that Agni is pleased when his devotee offers him what really is his (Agni's) own.

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A better interpretation would be that it is the 'truth' of Agni (in the sense of being natural to him), that he confers benefits on whoever offers him oblations. It is Agni's 'satya' (sādhubhāva, and niyamana, goodness and dispensation, सत् + य, see notes on previous mantra) to do good (maṅgala-vidhāna-svabhāva) to people. There is no surprise or doubt about Agni being good-natured; it is his own unique privilege. Here तत् तव refers to दाशुषे भद्रं करिष्यसि। which is सत्यम्। His invariant dharma is power combined with compassion (ज्ञानैश्वर्यदया). Further, the भद्र (good that he confers on his devotee) is his own सत्य, and nothing else.

यत् अङ्ग अग्ने।	whatever, dear Agni,
दाशुषे।	for the donor of the oblations; for the sacrificer
त्वं भद्रं करिष्यसि।	you confer blessings (wealth, progeny, home and cattle)
तव इत् तत्।	that is really yours
सत्यम्।	This is true
अङ्गिरः।	O Aṅgiras

यदङ्ग अग्नेत्वम्। अङ्गेति क्षिप्रनामाश्चितं एवाङ्कितं भवति (*Nirukta,* 5,3,17). अङ्गेति सम्बोधनार्थको निपातः। अभिमुखीकरणार्थश्च। अग्ने। आमन्त्रितस्य च। *Pāṇini* 8,1,19

क्षिप्रे च पुनरर्थे च सङ्गमासूययोस्तथा।
हर्षे सम्बोधने चैव ह्यङ्गशब्दः प्रयुज्यते॥
अत्र सम्बोधनार्थे अङ्गसब्द प्रयोगः॥

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दाशुषे । दाशृ दाने इत्यस्मात् चतुर्थ्यैकवचने । हविर्दत्तवते यजमानाय ।

भद्रम् करिष्यसि । कल्याणम् । भदि कल्याणे इति धातोः रक्प्रत्ययः । 'यद्वै पुरुषस्य वित्तं तद्भद्रं गृहा भद्रं प्रजा भद्रं पशवो भद्रं ।' इति शाट्यायनिनः ।

तवेतत् । तव इत् । तनु । तव स्वीयम् । सुखहेतुरिति शेषः ।
तत्सत्यम् । तत् प्रसिद्धम् ।
अङ्गिरः । अङ्गतीत्याङ्गिराः तत्सम्बुद्धौ । अङ्गिरा अङ्गाराः (निरुक्ते ३,१७)

II

ADHI-DAIVA

Agni is here called 'aṅgira', a word of considerable importance in Vedic literature. There is no doubt that it is one of the common names for Agni, especially in the sense of flaming fire (√अगि गतौ "to go", अङ्ग् being the nasalized form of अग्), from 'aṅgati', "moves upwards" (aṅgati, aṅgitum). Agni is lit (cf. 1,83,4 इद्धाग्नयः ।) from charcoal (aṅgāra), and it is in front of this fire, lit first (agne), that all rituals are performed. Agni is aṅgirā, because he goes upwards, he takes the worshipper up (अगि गतौ +अस् इरस् च ।); he is also aṅgāra (अगि + आरन् इदितोनुंधातोरिति नुम् ।), in the sense of being luminous (cf. *Nirukta,* 3,17 अङ्गिरा अङ्गाराः).

From the Vedic sources, we understand that Aṅgiras was a sage-seer (ṛshi) (e.g. 1,83,4; 4,5,4 etc.), who learnt Brahman-wisdom from Satyavāhi,

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(a descendent of the sage Bharadvāja), who in turn was taught by Aṅgir (a disciple of Atharvan). This Angiras had four sons, Agni, Samvarta, Utathya and Bṛhaspati. Another version of the lineage is : Atharvan → Bṛhaspati → Bhāradvaja, the family priest of the celebrated king Divodāsa. And Atharvan had two sons, besides Bhāradvaja : Gotama and Vṛshaṇa. Vṛshaṇa → Sudhanvā-āngira → the three Ṛbhus (Ṛbhu, Vibhvan and Vāja) who learnt from Tvashtṛ-prajāpati. These sages and their family-members called themselves 'āṅgirasas', and descendents of Agni (cf. *Atharva-veda,* 18,4,13 आङ्गिरसः सुकृतः, followers of the path of ṛta) : Bhṛgus, Kaṇvas, Pajras and Maudgalyas.

The *anukramaṇis* mention forty different names of āngirasas including Brāhmaṇaspati-Bṛhaspati. We have a Ghora-āngirasa, who was a teacher of Devakī-putra Kṛshṇa (*Chhāndogya* 3,17,6); there is also sage-seer with this name (RV 8,85). There were many ancient ṛshis (1,1,2 पूर्वेभिर्ऋषिभिरीड्यः) who aligned themselves to the lineage of Agni as Aṅgira (cf. RV 10,92,15 पूर्वो अङ्गिराः ।); Hiraṇya-stūpa, Savya, Kutsa, Praskaṇva, Yayāti, Priyamedhā, Atri, Kaṇva, Manu and Vāmadeva among others. RV (10,62,5) speaks of ते अङ्गिरसः सूनवस्ते अग्नेः परिजज्ञिरे ।; and (10,14,6) आङ्गिरसो नः पितरः । Also (1,31,17) मनुष्वदग्ने अङ्गिरस्वदङ्गिरो ययातिवत्सदने पूर्ववच्छुचे ।

They were all born of Agni, and in turn generated Agni (1,12,6 अग्निनाग्निः समिध्यते ।). Hence *Aitareya-brāhmaṇa* (3,34) describes them as 'aṅgirasas', as bits of live charcoal, from one burning fire :

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योऽङ्गारा आसंस्तेऽङ्गिरसोऽभवन् ।

We read in *Kāṭhaka-brāhmaṇa* (3,6) that Brahmā, Bṛhaspati, Udgātṛ and Adhvaryu were āṅgirasas. There are references even in Ṛgveda that āṅgirasas were Udgātṛs (viz. Sāman-chanters), e.g. :

1,107,2 अङ्गिरसां सामभिः स्तूयमानाः ।

10,78,5 विश्वरूपा आङ्गिरसो न सामभिः ।

10,108,8 ऋषयः सोमशिताः ।

It is interesting that in *Taittirīya-samhitā* (2,2,2) several names of Agni are listed; some of which are given below :

Pathi-kṛt (road-maker; path-maker)
Vrata-pati (lord of discipline and austerity)
Raksho-han (killer of wicked spirits)
Rudra-vat (possessing ferocity)
Surabhi-mat (fragrant)
Kāma (free will)
Āyushmat (long-lived)
Jātavedas (knower of all things even at birth)
Rukmat (bright and burning)

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Tejasvat (lustrous)

Sāhantya (conqueror, powerful)

Kshāmavat (grounded on earth)

Annavat (possessor of food)

Annāda (giver of food)

Annapati (lord of food)

Pavamāna (moving free and clear)

Pāvaka (purifier)

Śuchi (pure)

Putravat (having progeny)

Vasumat (possessor of riches)

Vājasṛt (racer; fast-runner)

Jyotishmat (brilliant and luminous)

Agni (yajña) is the chariot of the gods (deva-ratha), (*Aitareya-brāhmaṇa* 10,5 देवरथो वा एष यद्यज्ञः ।); the horse is held in rein by two ropes (raśmī) : one ājya-śastra and the other prauga-śastra. By the former, self-culture is accomplished (आत्मसंस्कृतिं वेद तत्सुविदितम्), viz. perfect and correct knowledge arises (samyag-jñanam utpannam).

तामनुकृतिं मनुष्यरथस्यैवान्तरौ रश्मी विहरन्त्यलोभाय नास्य देवरथो
लुभ्यति न मनुष्यरथो य एवं वेद ॥

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III

ADHYĀTMA

Ānanda-tīrtha summarizes the spiritual import of this mantra :

यजमानाय यद्भद्रं कर्तुमिच्छसि सत्प्रिय ।
त्वच्चेष्टयैव कर्माणि वर्तयित्वा तदीहनम् ।
तवैव सत्यमङ्गानां रसयद् वह्निगो हरिः ।
अङ्गिरा अङ्गिरः पुत्रो यतोऽग्निरभवत् कचित् ।।

Agni is dear to the good folk. He desires to do good to those who offer him worship; and this desire will never fail, it will surely be fulfilled (satyam, avitatham). This, however, is not a praise that Agni will do good only in return to the services rendered to him (vinimaya, exchange, upakārasya pratyupakāra-mātram). Agni (and the Supreme Spirit inherent in him) is what inspires all actions, including the offering of oblations and worship on the part of the devotee, the performer of internal sacrifice (jñāna-yajñasya yajamānah). *Chhāndogya* (1,2,6) explains how Agni is 'aṅgiras' in the sense of the essence (viz. inspirer) of all bodily functions (sarva-śarīrāṇām prerakah) :

एतमु एवाङ्गिरस मन्यन्तेऽङ्गानां यद्रसस्तेनेति ।।

अङ्ग अग्ने ।	O Agni, dear to the good folk
यत् दाशुषे ।	for the giver (of devotion, of offerings, of oblations)

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त्वं भद्रं करिष्यसि ।	you desire to do good
तव इत् तत्सत्यम् ।	that is surely effective, truth is yours only
अङ्गिरः ।	for you are the inspirer of all actions (bodily and mental)

अङ्ग । सत्प्रिय, सज्जनप्रिय ।

दाशुषे । दाशृदाने । दात्रे यजमानाय । ददाशेति दाश्चान् । तस्मै देवतोद्देशेन हविरादिदात्रे *(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā-vivṛti);* दाश्वान् साह्वान् मीढ्वांश्च (एते शब्दाःनिपात्यन्ते) । दाशृ दान इति धातोः कसुप्रत्यये ककारलोपे दाखमिति प्रातिपापदिक निष्पत्त्यनन्तरं स्वाद्युत्पत्तौ दाखानिति रूपं निष्पद्यते । *(Mantrārtha-mañjari).*

भद्रं कर्तुमिच्छसि । यदिच्छारूपमीहनम् । ईहनं मानसिको व्यापारः *(Padārtha-prakāśikā)*

तवेत् । तवैव ।

सत्यम् । अवितथम् । अस्मा इदं दास्यामीतीच्छसि चेददास्येव । यत्करिष्यति तत्सत्यमिति यथास्थितयोजनायां स्तुतिर्न स्यात् *(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā)* । वस्तुस्थितिकथनमात्र-परत्वप्राप्त्याऽस्य सर्वसाधारण्येन स्तुतिसमयोपयुक्तासाधारणमहागुणाप्रतिप्रतिपाद-कत्वादिति भावः । *(Padārtha-prakāśikā)* । सर्वैरपि करिष्यमाणस्य सत्यत्वा-दिति भावः । प्रयोजनं विनिमयव्यावृत्तिरूपम् । *(Padārtha-dīpikā)* उपकारस्य प्रत्युपकारमात्रं विनिमयरूपम् । *(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā-vivṛti).*

अङ्गिरः । अङ्गानां रसः । (निरुक्तत्वात् ।) । सर्वशरीराणां प्रेरकः *(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā)* । अङ्गिरसः पुत्रो अग्निरपि अङ्गिराः इत्युच्यते *(Mantrārtha-mañjari)* । अध्यात्मं अङ्गानां रसः तस्य सम्बुद्धिः । सर्वशरीरप्रेरक इत्यर्थः ॥ *(ibid.)* । अग्नौ नियामकः । तदधीनत्वादर्थवत् अङ्गिराः ॥

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(7)

(संहितापाठः ।)

उप॑ त्वाग्ने दि॒वेदि॑वे दोषा॑व-
स्तर्धि॒या व॒यम् ।
नमो॒ भर॑न्त॒ एम॑सि ॥७॥

(पदपाठः ।)

उप॑ । त्वा॒ । अ॒ग्ने॒ । दि॒वेऽदि॑वे । दोषा॑ऽवस्तः । धि॒या । व॒यम् ॥
नम॑ । भर॑न्तः । आ । इ॒म॒सि॒ ॥

(अन्वयः ।)

अग्ने, वयं दिवे दिवे दोषावस्तः धिया नामो भरन्तः उप त्वा एमसि ॥

Agni is directly addressed here (pratyaksha-kṛta). He is light in the darkness alround (doshāvastah). The sage-seer affirms that all the people (vayam, "we"), with their willing minds (dhiyā), approach this Agni (upa tvā emasi), carrying with them their humble devotion (namo bharantah).

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I

ADHI-YAJÑA

In *Aitareya-brāhmaṇa* (5,4), the last three mantras (tṛcha) 7,8 and 9 of the first sūkta are prescribed to be recited during the ritual known as 'agnīshoma-praṇayana'.

उप त्वाग्ने दिवेदिवे उप प्रियं पनिप्नतमिति तिस्रश्चैकां चान्वाह ॥

This ritual begins by ceremonially bringing (praṇayana) the sacred fire from the sacrificial home (yajñagṛha) called Prāchīnavamśa to the altar known as uttara-vedī (agni-praṇayana), and the sacrificial fire from the pavilion called Havirdhāna-maṇḍapa to the same altar (haviṛdhāna-praṇayana). Then another sacred fire (agni) and soma are together brought near the uttara-vedi and placed in agnīdhriya kuṇḍa, reciting the mantras. This ritual sequence is called 'agnīshoma-praṇayana'. The sacrificing priest (adhvaryu) asks the invoking priest (hotṛ) to recite the appropriate mantras; to undo the opposition between these two sacred fires :

अग्नीषोमाभ्यां प्रणीयमानाभ्यामनुब्रूहीत्याहाध्वर्युः ॥

Then the following four mantras are recited, (उपत्वाग्ने दिवेदिव उपप्रियं पनिपन्नमिति तिस्रश्चैकां चान्वाह ॥) the first three for placating the first sacred fire, and the fourth to placate the second sacred fire :

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1. उपत्वाग्ने दिवे दिवे दोषावस्त-
धिया वयम् ।
नमो भरन्त एमसि ॥

(1,1,7)

2. राजन्तमध्वराणां गोपा-
मृतस्य दीदिवम् ।
वर्धमानं स्वे दमे ॥

(1,1,8)

3. स नः पितेव सूनवेऽग्ने
सूपायनो भव ।
सचस्वा नः स्वस्तये ॥

(1,1,9)

4. उप प्रियं पनिप्नतं युवान-
माहुतीवृधम् ।
अगन्म बिभ्रतो नमः ॥

(9,97,29)

Sāyaṇa

हे अग्ने । वयम् अनुष्ठातारः । दिवेदिवे प्रतिदिनम् । दोषावस्ता रात्रौ अहनि च । धिया बुद्ध्या । नमोभरन्तः नमस्कारं सम्पादयन्तः । उप समीपे । त्वैमसि त्वां आगच्छामः ॥

According to Sāyaṇa, the performers of the sacrifice (anushṭhātārah) collectively (vayam) articulate this mantra. They seek to approach close to

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Agni (upa tvā), every day (dive dive), night and day (doshāvastah), mindfully (dhiyā) and with prostrations (namo bharantah).

उप त्वा ।	close to thee (we approach)
अग्ने ।	O Agni, the sacred fire-deity
दिवे दिवे ।	every day; day after day
दोषावस्तः ।	night and day
धिया ।	with our mind; attentively
वयं एमसि ।	we approach (thee)
नमो भरन्तः ।	doing our prostrations

उप ।	समीपे । (निपातः ।)
अग्ने ।	
दिवेदिवे ।	प्रनिदिनम् । अनुदिनम् । वीप्सायां द्विर्वचनम् ।
दोषावस्तः ।	दोषः शब्दो रात्रिवाची । वस्तरिति दिनवाची । तयोर्द्वन्द्वः । अहर्निशम् । रात्रावहनि । अन्धकारे प्रकाशे वा । सदा ।
धिया ।	बुद्ध्या । धारणावत्या ।
वयम् ।	अनुष्ठातारः । याजकाः ।
नमोभरन्तः ।	नमस्कारं सम्पादयन्तः । √भृ भृञ् भरणे । शबूविकरणम् । प्रणतिं वहन्तः ।

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एमसि । उप आ इमसि । इति पदत्रयम् । उपयाम । आगच्छामः । इदंतोमसिः (Pāṇini 7,1,46) मस इगागमः । शरणत्वेन । √इण् गतौ । इत्यस्माल्लट उत्तमपुरुष बहुवचनम् ।

II

ADHI-DAIVA

What has been said above about Agni (in the Notes on previous mantras) holds here also.

III

ADHYĀTMA

Ānanda-tīrtha's summary :

वस्तर्दिनमहोरात्रं अभीष्टं प्राणिनां सदा ।
अल्पा अपि वयं बुद्ध्या त्वामुच्चगुणमीश्वरम् ।
उपयाम मनःकर्मवाग्भिस्त्वन्नमसम्भराः ॥

While the adhyātma interpretation here does not differ much from the adhi-yajña approach, it brings out several interesting implications. One is that the devotees need to recognize their own limitations (alpā api), in contrast to the high and supreme nature of the Lord (uchcha-guṇam īśvaram). The living

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beings are lacking in many things, and would always look for obtainments and satisfactions (abhīshṭam prāṇinām sadā). They therefore approach the Supreme Spirit (upayāma). When they do so, they humbly offer prostrations by mind, speech and bodily actions (manah-karma-vāgbhih). Further, the very approach is by mind only (dhiyopemasi); and the prostrations are also by the mind (dhiyā namobharantah).

The expression 'namobharantah' in the text has been taken in the sense of 'nama-sambharāh'; and Jayātīrtha points out that this is justified in the adhyātma interpretation :

तव नमनं संबिभ्राणाः सन्तः। नमनं नमः संबिभ्रतीति सम्भाराः ॥

(Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā)

नमेरसुन्प्रत्यये नम इति रूपम्। औणदिके अकारप्रत्यये नम इत्यकारान्तं रूपं सिद्धं भवति।

नमनं नमः संबिभ्रतीति सम्भरा इति पाठे नमेरौणादिकोऽप्रत्ययः संपूर्वात् बिभर्तेः पचद्यजिति ज्ञेयम ॥

(Padārtha-dīpikā)

नमो भरन्त इति श्रौतपदद्वयव्याख्या भाष्यकारैस्तन्नमसम्भरा इति समस्तपदेन कृता। तद्व्याचष्टे। नमतेर्भावे औणादिकेऽकारप्रत्ययः सम्भरशब्दस्तु पचाद्यजंत इति भावः।

(Ṛgbhashya-ṭīkā-vivṛti)

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And this meaning emphasizes the devotee's dedication of his entire being to the Godhead (ātma-samarpaṇam). The 'nama-sambhara' includes the submission of the mind internally and of speech and body as external

अध्यात्मं मनसा बहिः कर्मवाग्भ्यां त्वन्नमसम्भराः ।

This dedication is justified by the devotee being conditioned, limited and bound, while the object of his devotion is altogether unconditioned, utterly unlimited and absolutely free.

स्वस्याल्पगुणत्वे हरेरधिकगुणत्वे च स्तुत्यत्वं सिद्ध्यति ॥

(Padārtha-prakāśikā)

Another interpretation of interest is taking the word 'doshāvasta' as qualifying Agni : as light in darkness. The word 'doshāvastṛ' in this sense is a noun with ऋ ending; the form of address would be 'doshāvastah' हे अग्ने दोषावस्तः । This interpretation is justified on the ground that otherwise the words दिवेदिवे and दोषावस्तः would be tautological. There are passages in Ṛgveda where the word 'doshāvasta' is used in the sense of light in darkness, e.g. :

4,4,9 इह त्वा भूर्या चरेदुप त्वन्
दोषावस्तर्दीदिवांसमनु द्यून् ॥

7,15,15 त्वं नः पाह्यंहसो दोषावस्तरघायतः
दिवानक्तमदाभ्यः ॥

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अग्ने ।	O Agni, the sacred fire, the deity inhering in it, and the Supreme Spirit in the body
दोषावस्तः ।	who is the light amidst darkness
दिवे दिवे ।	day by day; always
वयम् ।	we, the performers of the internal sacrifice
धिया ।	by our minds and other faculties; inquiring
नमोभरन्तः ।	dedicating ourselves entirely to you
त्वा उप एमसि ।	(we) come to you with great devotion

अग्ने ।	हे अग्ने, तदन्तर्गतहरे, शरीरेश्वररूपेणावस्थित ।
दोषावस्तः ।	दोषावस्तृशब्दस्य संबोधनैकवचने । तमसि (दोषा) प्रकाशः (वस्ता √वस्) । दोषा रात्रिः वस्तार्दिनमित्यहः ।
दिवेदिवे ।	सदा । प्रकाशितासु वा तमोवृतासु वा । सर्व्वेलासु । सर्वावस्थासु ।
वयम् ।	अन्तर्याजकाः ।
धिया ।	(उपलक्षणं) बुद्ध्यादिभिर्गुणैः । विचारक्रियया ।
नमोभरन्तः ।	समर्पणं वहन्तः । आत्मसमर्पणमिति यावत् । नमसंभराः । अध्यात्मं मनसा बहिः कर्मवाग्भ्यां त्वन्नमसम्भराः । नमनं नमः संबिभ्रतीति संभराः । (धिया नमो भरन्तः ।) प्राणिनां अभीष्टेत्यनेन अभीष्टप्रदे भक्त्यतिशयस्य जायमानत्वात् भक्त्यतिशय एव शरण प्राप्तौ साधनमित्युक्तं भवति ॥ (धिया नमोभरन्तः ।)

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त्वा उप एमसि । उपयाम । इन्दोमसीति इत् । शरणं व्रजेम । त्वा उच्चगुणं ईश्वरमपि त्वां । केवलं भक्त्यतिशयवशात् शरणं उपयाम । अभीष्टप्रार्थनार्थकत्वार्थो बोद्धव्यः । स्तुत्युपयोगित्वा दिति भावेनाह शरणं व्रजेम इति ॥

The approach crystallized by the glosses on Ānanda-tīrtha's *Ṛgbhāshya* and Jayatīrtha's *Ṭīkā* on it, lays emphasis on jñāna-yajña or internal sacrifice, which is performed by the mind and in the interior of the individual. This is precisely 'adhyātma'. This mantra brings out the importance of loving devotion (bhakti) and self-surrender (ātma-samarpaṇa). The former is the means of the latter (sādhana). The expression उपेमसि in the mantra is taken in the sense of शरणं व्रजेम.। And this is qualified by two other instrumental words : धयिा उपेमसि and नमोभरन्तः उपेमसि । Further, धिया नमोभरन्तः । also seems relevant.

We may point out that *Aitareya-āraṇyaka* (3,1,1) has these pertinent thoughts :

मनः पूर्वरूपम् । वागुत्तररूपम् । मनसा वा अग्रे
संकल्पयत्यथ वाचा व्याहरति ॥

Here 'manasā' may be seen as the same as 'dhiyā' (by will, attention and deliberation); and 'vāchā vyāharati' is identical with 'namobharantah' (or 'namasambharāh') *Taittirīya-samhitā* (6,3,10,4) makes it more explicit

यद्वै हृदयेनाभिगच्छति तज्जिह्वया वदति । यज्जिह्वया वदति तदुरसोऽधि
निर्वदति ॥

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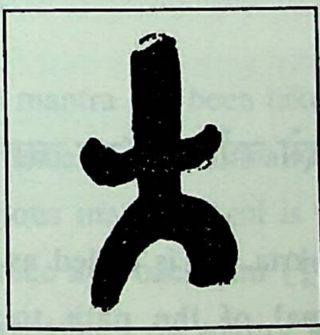
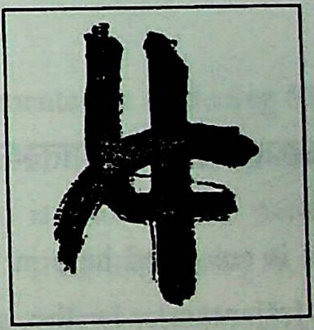
(NOTE : A variant reading for नमोभरन्तः or rather for नमसंभराः has been suggested in *Padārtha-dīpikā :*

नभः नभसं बिभ्रतीति नभसंभरा इति क्वचित्पाठः ॥)

* * * *





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(8)

(संहितापाठः ।)

राज॑न्तमध्व॒राणां॑ गो॒पामृ॒तस्य॒
दीदि॑विम् ।
वर्ध॑मानं॒ स्वे दमे॑ ॥८॥

(पदपाठः ।)

राज॑न्तम् । अ॒ध्व॒राणा॑म् । गो॒पाम् । ऋ॒तस्य॑ । दीदि॑विम् ॥
वर्ध॑मानम् । स्वे । दमे॑ ॥

(अन्वयः ।)

राजन्तं अध्वराणां गोपां ऋतस्य दीदिविं स्वे दमे वर्धमानं (उप त्वा एमसि) ॥

Agni is eulogized here in the paroksha-kṛta. He is hailed as luminous, shining (rājantam), as the guardian (gopa) of the path to the gods (adhvarāṇām), as one who illumines the cosmic order (ṛtasya dīdivam), and as one who flourishes in his own home (vardhamānam sve dame). The sentence, however, is incomplete.

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I

ADHI-YAJÑA

The viniyoga of this mantra in the Agnīshoma-praṇayana has already been mentioned (in the explanation of the previous mantra).

Sāyaṇa

पूर्वमन्त्रे त्वामुपैम इत्यग्निमुद्दिश्योक्तम् ॥

कीदृशं त्वाम् ? राजन्तं दीप्यमानम् । अध्वराणां राक्षसकृतहिंसारहितानां यज्ञानाम् । गोपां रक्षकम् । ऋतस्य सत्यस्य अवश्यंभाविनः कर्मफलस्य । दीदिवं पौनः पुन्ये भृशं वा द्योतकम् । आहुत्याधारमग्निं दृष्ट्वा शास्त्रप्रसिद्धं कर्मफलं स्मर्यते । स्वे दमे स्वकीयगृहे यज्ञशालायाम् । हविर्भिः वर्धमानम् ॥

This mantra has been taken by all commentators (including Sāyaṇa and Ananda-tīrtha as a continuation of the previous mantra. Sāyaṇa says that in the previous mantra, Agni is addressed and is told that the performers of the sacrifice approach him (पूर्वमन्त्रे "त्वामुपैम" इत्यग्निं उद्दिश्य उक्तम् ।). Now, this mantra expatiates on who or how this Agni is (कीदृशं त्वाम् ?). Jayatīrtha also points out that this mantra refers to the Agni that is approached by the sacrificers (त्वामुपेमसि इति पूर्वेण सम्बन्धः ।) cf. also Rāghavendra-tīrtha : त्वामुपेमसि इत्यनुवर्त्य योज्यम् । *(Mantrārtha-mañjarī).* So here is a description of the sacrificial deity, Agni.

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He is, first of all, luminous (rājantam, from राजृ दीप्तौ । देदीप्यमानम् ।), shining brilliantly, as the flaming fire on the altar suggests.

Then he is the guardian of the sacrifice where violence is absent (adhvara). He guards the sacrifices (yajñānām rakshakah), by driving away the demons of destruction and preventing their violence. The sacrificial sessions are thus free from violence (himsā-rahita, a-dhvara).

He lights up (dīdivam) again and again the order (ṛtasya) of the fructs of actions following inevitably the actions. The rewards of the sacrifice cannot fail on any account; the sacrificer is eligible to them, and Agni will surely make him obtain them.

He flourishes, increasingly glows (vardhamānam) owing to the offerings of oblations (like ghee, havis) made repeatedly during the sacrifice, in his own (sve) homestead, viz. the sacrificial altar or the sacrificial pavilion (dame, yajña-śālāyam). There are passages in Ṛgveda, which suggest this view : e.g. 3,10,2

त्वां यज्ञेष्वृत्विजमग्ने होतारमीळते ।
गोपा ऋतस्य दीदिहि स्वे दमे ॥

Ṛta in the context is synonymous with yajña, e.g.

1,163,5 ऋतस्य या अभिरक्षन्ति गोपाः ।
3,10,2 quoted above

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6,49,15 पुरुवीरं मह ऋतस्य गोपाम् ॥

8,60,5 त्वमित्सप्रथा अस्यग्ने त्रातर्ऋतस्कविः ।
त्वां विप्रासः समिधान दीदिव आ
तत्विवासन्ति वैधसः ॥

9,73,8 ऋतस्य गोपा न दभाय सुक्रतुः ॥

10,118,7 गोपा ऋतस्य दीदिहि ॥

Agni increases in brilliance (flames up) (vardhamānam) on the alter, by consuming the offerings smeared with clarified batter made into the fire, e.g. 2,3,4

देवं बर्हिर्वर्धमानः सुवीरं विस्तीर्णं राये
सुभरं वेदस्याम् ।
घृतेनाक्तं वसवः सीदतेदं विश्वे देवा
आदित्या यज्ञियासः ॥

There is here a clear picture of the flaming fire on the altar. So the word 'dame' (meaning homested) refers to the place where the sacrifice is being performed (yajña-gṛha) where Agni rules (e.g. 10,9,10) :

त्वमध्वरीयसि ब्रह्मा चासि गृहपतिश्च नो दमे ॥

cf. also 8,102,11, where the fire's splendour in sacrifices is recounted

शीरं पावक शोचिषं ज्योष्ठो यो दमेष्वा
दीदाय दीर्घश्रुत्तमः ॥

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राजन्तम् ।	one who shines brightly
अध्वराणाम् ।	of the sacrifices that are free from violence
गोपाम् ।	the protector, the guardian
ऋतस्य ।	of the order of works leading to fruits
दीदिवम् ।	one who is resplendent again and again or repeatedly
वर्धमानम् ।	growing flourishing, flourishing, increasing
स्वे दमे	in his own homestead (fire-altar or house of sacrifice

राजन्तम् ।	दीप्यमान्म् । from राजृ दीप्तौ ।
अध्वराणाम् ।	हसिारहित यज्ञानाम् ।
गोपाम् ।	रक्षकम् । from गुपू रक्षणे । अस्मात् आकार प्रत्यये गुणे च गोपा इति शब्दः
ऋतस्य ।	सत्यस्य । कर्मफलस्य ।
दीदिवम् ।	पुनःपुनः भृशं वा द्योतमानम् । देदीप्यमानम् । दीव्यतेः दीप्त्यर्थकात् दिव् धातोः रेकाच इति मङ प्रत्यये सन्यङो द्वित्वे दिदिव् यङ् इति जाते यङो लुकि पश्चादिकारप्रत्यये दीदिवीति जातम् । पुनःपुनः अतिशयेन देदेति इति भृशार्थे ।
वर्धमानम् ।	सदावृधम् । हविभिः ।
स्वे दमे	स्वकीयगृहे । यज्ञशालायाम् । दम इति गृहनाम (निघण्टुः ६,४) ।

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II

ADHI-DAIVA

Agni, the deity (devata) of this entire suūkta has been described here. He is the god of light; he shines widely. He is also the one who reigns. The expression 'rājantam' signifies both aspects. He is 'rajan' (regent, ruler, monarch) in many Ṛgvedic passages (e.g. 10,1,6; 10,3,1; 10,4,1; 10,87,3). We read in 6,1,8, where both aspects are combined

राजन्तमग्निं यजतं रयीणाम् ।

However, it may not be relevant to take the word 'rājantam' independently, as Sāyaṇa has done. More often, this word is employed with reference to 'adhvarāṇām' : राजन्तमध्वराणाम् । :

1,27,1	संराजन्तमध्वराणाम् ।
1,45,4	राजन्तमध्वराणां अग्निं शुक्रेण शोचिषा ।
8,8,18	राजन्तावध्वराणामश्विना यामहूतिषु ।

The significance of the word 'adhvara' in the Vedic context has already been explained. It is more particularly the path that leads upwards and it has already been told that Agni is the deity that makes this path, or keeps this path ready for the mortal man, and leads him along this path. The expression 'rājanṭam adhvarāṇām' would mean that Agni is the illuminor of this path; he lights up this path that leads to the gods.

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He is also 'gopā ṛtasya', meaning the protector or guardian of ṛta. Noww the word ṛta has a force and significance of great import in the Vedic context. It is usual to take it in the sense of cosmic order. (cf. 10,85,1 ऋतेनादित्यास्तिष्ठन्ति दिवि सोमो अधिश्रितः ॥ and 2,27,8 ऋतेनादित्या महि वो महित्वम् ॥). The ritualists like Sāyaṇa identify ṛta with yajña, with the involved suggestion that it is the law of nature to produce the results in accordance with the actions done (karma-phala). Often, ṛta is not distinguished from satya (truth, reality). The word-power extends beyond these meanings.

The word is derived from the root ऋ (गत्यां स्पर्धने ऐश्वर्ये घृणायाम् ।), which has the primary import of "going straight", "going onwards", "to go towards", "reaching", "obtaining". The secondary meaning is "what is right, proper, suitable and settled".

Extended meanings are "law", "sacred custom", "holy action", "what is worshipped or revered". It has also the meanings of truth (satyam), water (jalam), sun (sūryah), Brahmaṇ or the Supreme Spirit (*Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* ब्रह्म वा ऋतं ब्रह्म हि मित्रो ब्रह्म ऋतं ब्रह्म एवायुः । cf. also ऋतमेकाक्षरं ब्रह्म ।).

But the most pertinent significance of the word in most of the Ṛgvedic contexts is the all-pervasive supreme and fundamental reality, which articulates in all existence, and to seek which is the natural and necessary obligation of mortal man endowed with intelligence.

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It is the chariot that moves instantly covering both earth and heaven, and stretches beyond (cf. with reference to Aśvins, 3,58,8 रथो ह वां ऋतजा अद्रिजूतः परि द्यावापृथिवी याति सद्यः ॥). It is one with the rays of the sun, and with the Soma, the provider of immortality (cf. 1,137,2 with reference to Mitrā-Varuṇa, उत वामृषसो बुधि साकं सूर्यस्य रश्मिभिः।... चारुर्ऋताय पीतये॥). It is inherently truth, faith and austerity (cf. 9,113,2 ऋतवाकेन सत्येन श्रद्धया तपसा सुत इन्द्रायेन्दो परि स्रव॥). Like Soma flowing towards Indra. Man should "move towards" it, although it is his own essential nature, in the sense that he must choose the right and proper path. Agni symbolizes this goal as well as the path. As a god he illumines this path (adhvara), and guards it.

He is described as ṛta himself, e.g.

1.68.4 भजन्त विश्वे देवस्य नाम ऋतं
सपन्तो अमृतमेवैः।

4,3,9 ऋतेन ऋतं नियतमीळ।

5,12,2 ऋतं चिकित्व ऋतमिच्चिकिद्धृतस्य
धारा अनुतृन्धि पूर्वीः।

10,79,4 तद्वामृतं रोदसी प्र ब्रवीमि जायमानो
मातरा गर्भो अत्ति॥

There are numerous references to his intimate association with ṛta (ṛtasya). A few illustrations may be given :

श्रीदत्तवचनम्। श्रीदत्तवचनम्। श्रीदत्तवचनम्। श्रीदत्तवचनम्। श्रीदत्तवचनम्। श्रीदत्तवचनम्।

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1.65.3 ऋतस्य देवा अनुव्रता । (keeping close to ṛta)

1,68,5 ऋतस्य प्रेषा ऋतस्य धीतिः । (Agni is ṛta, the most sought after and the most enjoyed)

1,73,6 ऋतस्य हि धेनवो वावशानाः । (For agni is most desired and pervading by light)

3,12,7 ऋतस्य पथ्या अनु । (the path of ṛta)

3,27,11 अग्निं यन्तुरप्सुरमृतस्य योगे वनुषः ।

4,3,4 अग्ने अस्या ऋतस्य बोध्यृतचित् स्वाधीः । awareness of ṛta)

4,5,9 ऋतस्य पदे अधि दीद्यानम् । (above the path of ṛta)

5,7,3 उत द्युम्नस्य शवस ऋतस्य रश्मिमा ददे ।

5,12,1 प्राग्नये बृहते यज्ञियाय ऋतस्य वृष्णे असुराय मन्म ।

7,7,6 आ ये मे अस्य दीधयनृतस्य ।

8,19,35 स्यामेदृतस्य रथ्यः । (the chariot-course of ṛta)

10,5,2 ऋतस्य पदं कवयो नि पान्ति । (the foothold of ṛta)

10,5,4 ऋतस्य हि वर्तनयः ।

10,5,7 अग्निर्ह नः प्रथमजा ऋतस्य । the first-born of ṛta)

10,8,3 ऋतस्य योनौ तन्वो जुषन्त । (the source of ṛta)

10,8,5 भुवश्चक्षुर्महि ऋतस्य गोपा । (the guardian of ṛta)

10,70,2 ऋतस्य पथा नमसा मियेधो देवेभ्यो देवतमः सुषूदत् । (the path of ṛta)

10,80,6 अग्निर्गा धर्वें पथ्यां ऋतस्याग्नेर्गव्यूतिर्धृत आगिषत्ता । (the way of ṛta)

10.110.2 तनूनपात् पथ ऋतस्य यानान् । (the path of ṛta)

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Agni is the only one who knows the ṛta (1,72,8 ṛtajña). He is ṛta-conscious (ṛta-chit, 4,3,4 अस्य ऋतस्य बोध्यृतचित्स्वाधीः । 5,3,9 कदा चिकित्वो अभिचक्षसे नोऽग्ने कदा ऋतचिद्यातयासे ।). He is revealed in ṛta, he manifests himself in ṛta (ṛata-jāta 1,36,19 दीदेथ कण्वो ऋतजात उक्षिते ॥ also 4,13,3). He assists the seekers after ṛta (rta'vah, 5,8,1 त्वमग्न ऋतावयः समीधिरे ॥ 5,27,4 ददन् मेधां ऋञतायते ॥ 8,23,9 ऋतावानमृतायवो यज्ञस्य साधनं गिरा ॥ cf. also 5,12,3 कया नो अग्न ऋतयन् ऋतेन भुवो ॥ 4,8,3 स वेद देव आनमं देवाँ ऋतायते दमे । ; 10,5,3 ऋतायनी मायिनी सं दधाते ॥), for he possesses ṛta (ṛtāvah, 4,10,7 इत्था यजमानादृतावः ॥ 5,1,6 युवा कविः पुरुनिःष्ठ ऋतावा ॥ 5,25,1 ऋषूणां ऋतवा पर्षति द्विषः ॥ 7,3,1 यो मर्त्येषु निध्रुविर्ऋतावा तपुर्मूर्धा ॥ 10,2,2 पोत्रं जनानां मान्धातासि द्रविणोदा ऋतावा ॥ 10,6,2 यो भानुभिर्विभात्यग्निर्देवेभिर्ऋतावा जस्तः ॥ cf. also 2,1,2 त्वमग्निदृतायतः ॥)

There is also a reference to Agni being above the ṛta (ṛtād adhi) as, for instance, in 1,36,11

यमग्निं मेध्यातिथिः कण्व ईध ऋतादधि ।
तस्य प्रेषो दीदियुस्तमिमा ऋचस्तमग्निं
वर्धयामसि ॥

In most of the references to ṛta, we find that it is the transactional counterpart of Agni, if not identical with Agni. It is essentially the divine truth, the divine path faciliting the journey (adhvara(of man upwards. It is therefore the mantra we are considering (1,1,8) speaks of Agni as राजन्तं अध्वराणां गोपां ऋतस्य, the two roles put in juxtaposition : lighting up the pathway to the journey, and protecting the path. There are some passages where this

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juxtaposition of 'adhvara' (journey) and 'ṛta' (path) is made more explicit, as in 7.3.1

दूतमध्वरे कृणुध्वं यो मर्त्येषु
निध्रुविर्ऋतावा तपु-
मूर्धा घृतान्नः पावकः ॥

That Agni (īm), having drunk deep in the essential waters of ṛta, sets out to benefit the world and leads mortals along the straight paths of ṛta (1,79,3)

यदीं ऋतस्य पयसा पियानो
नयनृतस्य पथिभीरजिष्ठैः ।

Having described Agni thus, the mantra indicates that Agni also increases in his own 'homestead' वर्धमानं स्वे दमे). What now is his 'homestead'? In Ṛgvedic passages the expression 'dame' (meaning "gṛhe") is often used as instances may be cited

4,5,15	वसोरनीकं दम आ रुरोच ।
6,1,6	तं त्वा वयं दम आ दीदिवांसं ।
6,74,1	दमे दमे सप्तरत्ना दधाना ।
7,1,2	दक्षाय्यो यो दम आस नित्यः ।
7,1,19	मा नो दमे मा वन आ जुहूर्थाः ।
8,102,11	यो दमे ष्वादीदाय दीर्घश्रुत्तमः ।

ॐश्रीगुरुभ्यो नमः ॐश्रीगुरुभ्यो नमः ॐश्रीगुरुभ्यो नमः ॐश्रीगुरुभ्यो नमः ॐश्रीगुरुभ्यो नमः ॐश्रीगुरुभ्यो नमः

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10,7,4 अस्मे सनु त्रीर्यं त्राचसे दम आ नित्यहोता ।

10,91,1 सं जागृवद्भिर्जरमाण इध्यते दमुना इषयन्निळस्पदे ।

In all these cases, Agni is the deity invoked or addressed and the expression 'dama' is either the source or resting ground.

In some of them, we may note the association of repeated glowing (dīdivāmsam) with 'dama' (as in 6,1,6 and 8,102,11); the word 'dīdivim' in the present mantra we are considering occurs after 'ṛtasya' and before 'dame'. Another mantra (3,10,2) uses all three words in one sentence and context :

गोपा ऋतस्य दीदिहि स्वे दमे ।

Agni is hailed here as the guardian of ṛta, and as resplendent in his 'own home'. The present mantra points out that Agni not only nests resplendently in his 'own home' but grows or increases (vardhamānam). Agni is known to grow, after the imagery of the flames of the sacred fire, fed by the anointed faggots, rising high above the altar (6,9,4) :

अयं स सझे ध्रुव आ निषत्तोऽमर्त्य-
स्वन्वा ३ वर्धमानः ।

As he grows, the sage-seer conjures up the vision of immortality. In fact, there are many passages in Ṛgveda where 'ṛta' and 'amṛta' are closely knit, as for instance, in 1,77,1

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यो मर्त्येष्वमृत ऋतावा होता ।

or 1,68,3 भजन्त विश्वे देवत्वं नाम
ऋतं सपन्तो अमृतमेवैः ॥

All the gods obtain their immortality by taking resort to ṛta.

or 4,3,12 ऋतेन देवीरमृता अमृक्ता ।

Agni growing to immortality, or rather leading the mortal man to immortality shines resplendently (दीदिविम् ।). He is ablaze with light 2,9,1 होता होतृषदने विदानस्त्वेषो दीदिवाꣳ असदत्सुदक्षः ।). His light and splendour increase as he 'grows' (8,44,4 उत्ते बृहन्तो अर्चयः समिधानस्य दीदिवः । अग्ने शुक्रास ईरते ।) : Also

1,12,5 घृतवाहन दीदिवः प्रति ष्म रिषतो दह ।

2,2,11 यमग्ने यज्ञमुपयन्ति वाजिनो
नित्ये तोके दीदिवांसं स्वे दमे ॥

(Note the emphasis on Agni shining in his own homestead, 'dīdivāmsam sve dame')

3,27,15 अग्ने दीद्यन्तं बृहत् ।

4,4,9 इह त्वा भूर्या चरेदुप त्वन्म
दोषावस्तर्दीदिवांसमनु द्यून् ।

(Note : Skandasvāmi interprets 'dosha'Cvasta', which expression has already been explained, 1,1,7 : रात्रीश्च तमोरूपाः सतीः

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स्वेन ज्योतिषा प्रकाशरूपाः करोति ।, The night has its own light, by which all things, stationary and mobile, are manifested स्थावरं जङ्गमं च रात्रिषु प्रकाशयतीत्यर्थः ॥ 1,68,1-2)

5,24,4 तं त्वा शोचिष्ठ दीदिवः सुम्नाय ।
6,1,6 तं त्वा वयं दम आ दीदिवांसम् ।

(Note : it is the 'homestead', dama, which is illumined by Agni)

By considering all these references, it would appear valid to interpret 'dama' (homestead) of Agni (sve) as the devotees own heart, rather than as the altar or the sacrificial pavilion (according to the ritualists. It is here that Agni grows in splendour in gradual measures, and illumines the heart of the mortal man :

5,21,4 देवं वो देवयज्ययाग्नि-
मीळीत मर्त्यः ।
समिद्धः शुक्र दीदिह्यृतस्य
योनिंमासदः ससस्य ॥

5,23,4 शुक्र दीदिहि द्युमत्पावक दीदिहि ।

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ADHYĀTMA

Ānanda-tīrtha summarises the spiritual import of this mantra :

देदीप्यमानं स्वे सद्मन्यध्वरेशं सदा वृधम् ।
यथार्थ ज्ञानगोपं त्वामुपेमसि ॥८॥

According to him, the mantra is a continuation of the previous mantra (anuvṛtta), for he ends his summary with the words 'tvām upemasi', which occur only in the previous mantra.

His glossators take the words राजन्तं (देदीप्यमानम्) and अध्वराणाम् (अन्तर्यज्ञानाम्) together; and ऋतस्य (यथार्थज्ञानस्य), गोपाम् (गोप्तारं, रक्षकम्) together. Further, the word 'rājantam' has an interesting but pertinent involvement. The word is to be taken in the sense of "lording", " reigning over", "governing" (from राजृ दीप्तौ । राजतेरौणादिको झः झोन्तः), as suggested by Jayatīrtha. Agni lords over the external and internal sacrifices (बाह्याध्यात्मिकाध्वरेशम् ।). We have many Ṛgvedic passages where the word has been used in this sense, as well as the word 'rājan' for addressing the deity Agni.

6,1,8 राजन्तमग्निं यजतं रयीणाम् ।

10,1,6 इळायाः पुरोहितो राजन् यक्षीह देवान् ।

10,3,1 इनो राजन् अरतिः समिद्धो ।

10,4,1 त्वमग्न इयक्षवे पूरवे प्रत्न राजन् ।

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10,87,3 उतान्तरिक्षे परि याहि राजन्

जम्भैः सं देह्याभि यातुधानान् ॥

(addressed to Rakshohā-agni)

We have a more direct reference to Agni being the lord of sacrifices (external or internal), precisely as described in this mantra (4,3,1) :

आ वो राजानमध्वरस्य ।

cf. also 4,12,3

अग्निरीशे बृहतः क्षत्रियस्याग्नि-

र्वाजस्य परमस्य रायः ॥

7,11,4

अग्निरीशे बृहतो अध्वरस्याग्निः

विश्वस्य हविषः कृतस्य ॥

Agni reigns over the spiritual journey known as adhvara (alreadyexplained) in the sense that he knows all about it, being inside it, being its very life, and being the go-between for the mortals below and the gods above (1,72,7)

विद्वाꣳ अग्ने वयुनानि क्षितीनां

व्यनुषक्छुरुधो जीवसे धाः ।

अन्तर्विद्वाꣳ अध्वनो देवयानान्

अतन्द्रो दूतो अभवो हविर्वाट् ॥

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Satyanātha-yati rightly observes : अध्वराणां गोपां इत्यन्वयं विहाय अध्वाणां राजन्तं इत्यन्वयं अङ्गीकृत्य अध्वरेशमिति व्याख्यतम् । तद्ध घटयति ॥ *(Tīkā-vivṛti).*

In the next expression गोपां ऋतस्य I, the word 'ṛta' is taken in sense of correct knowledge of the real, the truth without an admixture of appearances and mentalfabrications (yathārtha-jñāna). Its guardian or protector (gopā) is Agni, who facilitates this knowledge, eschewing unreal involvements and projections. In the individual, the self is the reality (the ṛta, the yathārtha, truth) but it is camouflaged by the body, sense-organs and mind, which are 'anṛta' (non-ṛta). Agni and the other gods are described as ऋतपाः (guardian of ṛta), ऋतऽवृधः (builders of ṛta), ऋतायवः (possessors of ṛta) and ऋतादधि (above the ṛta).

The word दीदिविम् has the sense of देदीव्यमानम् , even as the word राजन्तम् used earlier, and taken by the ritualists as an independent expression (and not in the sense of illuminating the inner sacrifice राजन्तमध्वराणाम्). This word has been derived from 'dīvyateh' (meaning "the light", "the illumination" or "enlightenment". Agni symbolizes the light and facilitates enlightenment. The word therefore can stand independently.

He grows to a big flame from a tiny spark (vardamānam) in the heart of the seeker after ṛta (sve dame). The natural seat of the spiritual fire in the human being is the heart. *Padārtha-prakāśikā* correctly points out :

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स्वसद्मनि । (बाह्येऽग्निर्भगवदपेक्षया स्वर्गादावित्युक्तम् । अध्यात्मापेक्षया हृदये चेत्याह ॥

One of the passages in Ṛgveda (4,8,3) may be cited to expatiate the involvements of the approach :

स वेंद देव आनमं धेवाॅ ऋतायते दमे ॥

दाति प्रियाणि चिद्वसु ॥

Agni, himself the deva (the shining one, the light and the illuminator (the Supreme Spirit inherent in the deity known as Agni) knows all the reverential roles of the other devas (the lights and the illuminators) in the human constitution, and enables the devotee to undertake successfully this holy travel within towards the real (ṛtāyate dame) : he provides the desired wealth for the journey.

राजन्तं अध्वराणाम् ।	the shining ruler of the internal sacrifice
गोपां ऋतस्य ।	protector of the true knowledge (of the real)
दीदिविम् ।	The illumining principle
वर्धमानम् ।	always growing, perfect and complete
स्वे दमे ।	in the devotee's own heart; in the heart that is perfectly at rest.

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(अग्ने इत्याद्यनुवृत्तिः ।)

राजन्तम् । देदीव्यमानम् । राजतेरपि दीप्त्यर्थात् इत्यतः राजानम् । राजृ दीप्तौ इत्यस्मात् । राजतेरौणादिको झः झोन्तः । स्वामित्वार्थकराजन् शब्दस्य नकारान्तत्वनियमात् । धातूनामनेकार्थत्वात् ईशार्थकाद्राजते ईप्रत्यये तस्य अन्तादेशे राजन्तशब्दो अकारान्तः ईशत्ववाची ॥

अध्वराणाम् । अन्तर्यज्ञानाम् । बाह्याध्यात्मकाध्वरेशम् ।

गोपाम् । गोप्तारम् । रक्षकम् । गुपू रक्षणेइत्यस्मादाकारप्रत्यये गुणे च गोप इत्यकारान्तपुल्लिङ्गशब्दः (सोमपा इव ।) । परन्तु तस्मादेव धातोः अप्रत्यये गुणे च गोप इत्यकारान्तः शब्दः ॥

ऋतस्य । यथार्थज्ञानस्य ।

दीदिवम् । देदीव्यमानम् । द्युत्यर्थात् दीव्यतेः । राजन्तमिति पौनरुक्त्यम् । तत्परिहाराय दीप्त्यर्थकाद्दिव् धातोःरोका च इति यङ् प्रत्यये सन्यङो इति द्वित्वे दिदिव् यङ् इति जाते यङो लुकि पश्चादिकार प्रत्यये दीदिवीति जातम् । (दीव्यतेर्यङ्लुगन्तादिकारप्रत्ययोऽभ्यासस्य चेकारः ।)

वर्धमानम् । सदावृधम् । सदापूर्णम् । सार्वकालिकः शानच् । ताच्छील्यार्थश्चानश् वा (इगुपधलक्षणं कः किप् वा ।)

स्वे दमे । स्वे सद्मनि । स्वर्गादौ हृदये च । बाह्ये अग्निभगवदपेक्षया स्वर्गादौ, अध्यात्मापेक्षया हृदये च ॥ दमु उपशमे इत्यस्मा आधारे घञ् । उपशान्तहृदये ।

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(9)

(संहितापाठः ।)

स नः पितेव सूनवेऽग्ने
सूपायनो भव ।
सचस्वा नः स्वस्तये ॥९॥

(पदपाठः ।)

स । नः । पिताऽइव । सूनवे । अग्ने । सुऽउपायनः । भव ॥
सचस्व । नः । स्वस्तये

(अन्वयः ।)

अग्ने, सः त्वं सूनव पितेव नः सूपायनः भव । नः स्वस्तये सचस्व ॥

Agni is addressed here directly (pratyaksha-kṛta). He is sought to become easy of access (sūpāyano bhava) for all of us (nah), even as a father would be unto to his son (piteva sūnave). He is further requested to be close at heart or aling (sachasva) for (to) all of us (nah), so that good would be accomplished (svastaye).

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I

ADHI-YAJÑA

The viniyoga of this mantra has already been indicated (1,1,7).

Sāyaṇa

हे अग्ने, स त्वम् । नोऽस्मदर्थम् । सूपायनः शोभनप्राप्तियुक्तः । भव । तथा नोऽस्माकं । स्वस्तये विनाशराहित्यार्थम् । सचस्व समवेतो भव । तत्र उभयत्र दृष्टान्तः । यथा सूनवे पुत्रार्थं पिता सुप्रापः प्रायेण समवेतो भवति तद्वत् ॥

Agni, the deity of the sacrifice and the carrier of oblations to the other gods invoked in the sacrifice, is begged to be (bhava) for the worshippers (nah) the bestower of most propitious gifts (sūpāyanah). The expression सः has been used here in the sense of ''such a one'', referring to the description of Agni in the previous mantras. Further Agni is requested to be with the worshipper (sachasva) for securing the most auspicious benefit, which is freedom from decay, damage or destruction. And an illustration is given. Even as a fond father is of easy access to his own son in the sense of bestowing all benefits in life on him (sūpāyana), Agni is implored to be easily accessible to the worshipper.

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सा ।	such a one, you, Agni
नः ।	for us (for our sake)
पितेव सूनवे ।	even as a father to his son
सोपायनः भव ।	become easily accessible; become the means of securing the best benefits
सचस्व ।	be associated; come along; be constant; be a companion
नः ।	with us
स्वस्तये ।	for weal; for happiness; for well-being

सा ।	एवंभूतः त्वं अग्ने
नः ।	अस्मदर्थम् । अस्माकम् । बहुवचनस्य वस् नस् (*Pāṇini,* 8,1,21) ।
पितेव सूनुः ।	दृष्यान्तः । पिता इव पुत्रस्य । पुत्राय इति षष्ट्यर्थे चतुर्थी ।
सोपायनः भव ।	शोभनप्राप्तियुक्तः । शोभनं उपायनं यस्य सः । बहुव्रीहिः । सु उप इत्युपसर्गद्वयपूर्वकात् इण गतौ इत्यधिकरणे ल्युट् ।सूनोः सूपायन इति । शोभनोपाश्रयः ।
सचस्व ।	सिषक्तु सचत इति । षच सेचने सेवने च इति धातुपाठे । सेवायाम् । अस्मान् स्थिरतया सेवस्व । षच समवाये ।
स्वस्तये ।	सु अस्तये । सुभूतिरित्यर्थः । दृढसत्तो भव अस्मासु । स्थिरसंगीवनः । श्रेयसे । सुखमयस्थितये ॥

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II

ADHI-DAIVA

The relation between the mortal man and the deity is like the one between the son and his father (piteva sūnave). The father is not only fond of his son, but allows him the enjoyment of all the wealth and benefits. The father is easily approached by his son who is deferential, good-mannered and diligent. The approach of the devotee is likewise pleasing to the deity. cf. the expression 'sūnu' is often used in the sense of a child in Ṛgveda, as for instance, in 1,127,5 :

आदस्यायुर्ग्रभणवद्वीळु शर्म न सूनवे ।

or in 1,66,1 :

रयिर्न चित्रा सूरो न संदृगयुर्न
प्राणो नित्यो न सूनुः ।

or again 6,2,7 :

रण्वः पुरीव जूर्यः सूनुर्न त्रययाय्यः ।

The expression सचस्व used in the mantra has many shades of meaning :

Agni is for man a close companion (sachante) (cf. 10,5,4) :

ऋतस्य हि वर्तनयः सुजातमिषो
वाजाय प्रदिवः सचन्ते ॥

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He befriends the conscientious man easily (sachate) (8,60,18) :

केतेन शर्मन्त्सचते सुषामण्यग्ने
तुभ्यं चिकित्वना ॥

And he is constant in his relations with mortals. He cleaves (sachā) (1,140,1) :

वयो दधत्पद्वते रेरिहत्सदा-
नुश्येनी सचते वर्तनीरिह ॥

or (1,140,7) :

पुनर्वर्धन्ते अपि यन्ति देव्यमन्यद्वर्पः
पित्रोः कृण्वते सचा ॥

He can be together with the mortal devotee (5,16,5) :

ये वयं ये च सूरयः स्वस्ति धामहे
सचौतैधि पृत्सु नो वृधे ॥

He can indeed be one with the devotee, united with him (sachatām) (4,5,14) :

अधाते अग्ने किमिहा वदन्त्यनायुधास
आसता सचन्ताम् ॥

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or (4,5,10) :

अध द्युता नः पित्रोः सचासा
मनुत गुह्यं चारु पृश्नेः ॥

He adheres and clings to the devotee (sachata) (4,5,9) :

यदुस्रिया सचत पूर्व्यं गौः ।
ऋतस्य पदे अधि दीद्यानं गुहा ॥

III

ADHYĀTMA

The mantra is paraphrased by Ānanda-tīrtha with emphasis on the spiritual import

पितेव नः सूपाश्रयो भव
त्वं च यद्वदौरससूनेव ।
रक्ष सन्ततसौख्याय
सम्यक्सत्त्वाय वा सदा ॥

He sees a special significance in the illustration of पितेव सूनवे (like the father unto his son. The son may be an adopted one (datta-putra), or own son. The father's fondness for, and interest in, his own son would be greater

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and deeper than for the adopted one. Agni's interest in the devotee would be of this type. As *Ṛgbhāshya-ṭīkā=vivṛti* points out :

न केवलं पुत्रमात्राणां किन्तु पितोः औरससूनव इति भिन्नवाक्यतया व्याख्यानं युज्यते ।

Among twelve kinds of sons, the best is ones own son (औरसः । उरसा निर्मितः । उरस् अण् । स्वजातपुत्रः ।). *Baudhāyana* says सवर्णायां संस्कृतायां स्वयमुत्पादितमैरसं विद्यात् । The offspring from ones own consort hailing to ones own caste-group and properly cultured and consecrated, and born to oneself is called 'aurasa'. *Yajñavalkya* (2,131) also says औरसो धर्मपत्नीजः । *Manu* (9,166) :

स्वे क्षेत्रे संस्कृतायां तु स्वयमुत्पादयेद्धि यम् ।
तमौरसं विजानीयात् पुत्रं प्रथमकल्पितम् ॥

The significance of the Ṛgvedic expression 'पितेव सूनवे' is that even as the father becomes a support for his own son, Agni should become our support (यथा पिता पुत्रस्याश्रयोभवति तथाऽस्माकमाश्रयो भव ।). thus the illustration is for the sake of underlining the importance of 'sūpayana' (auspicious support सूपाश्रयः, शोभनोपाश्रयः). Agni (the deity of worship, and the Supreme Spirit dwelling in it) is of the nature of this most adorable support for the devotee. He is the one support that does not fail.

The expression 'sachasva', a call for Agni to come and protect, also comes in for a different interpretation. The root-word 'sacha' (√sacha = saj, sañj; sachate, *Dhātupāṭha,* 6,2) has many meanings : companionship,

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association, familiarity, possession, service, enjoyment, devotion, participation, obedience and proxirhity. The form 'sachā' signifies "being at hand", "being close"; 'sachate' is to be associated with, to associate, or to take part. More usually, the word is taken in the sense of serving, being devoted to, and going along together षच सेचने सेवने च; सिषक्तु सचते; सचतेः सेवार्थकत्वम्। सचन्ते सेवन्ते ।) But the sense of serving is irrelevant in the context (इह तदयोगात् ।). What agrees with the words 'sūpāyana' and 'svastaye' is the sense of protection (धातूनामनेकार्थत्वात् सचतिरिह रक्षायां वर्तते ।) सचस्व therefore means रक्ष.

'Svastaye' (dative of svasti) too is significant. Meaning fortune, well-being, prosperity, auspiciousness, success and happiness, the word 'svasti' has been used in the Ṛgvedic passages often in the sense of weal, blissful state and peace. Illustrations are :

3.10,8 भवा स्तोतृभ्यो अन्तमः स्वस्तये ॥

4.11,6 अग्ने यं देव आ चित्सचसे स्वस्ति ॥

5,4,11 गोमन्तं रयिं नशते स्वस्ति ॥

5,16,5 सूरयः स्वस्ति धामहे ॥

5,17,5 ऊर्जे नपादभिष्टये पाहि शग्धि स्वस्तय
उतैधि पृत्सु नो वृधे ॥

5,28,2 समिध्यमानो अमृतस्य राजसि
हविष्कृण्वन्तं सचये स्वस्तये ॥

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6,4,8 नू नो अग्नेऽवृकेभिः स्वस्ति ॥

6.15,8 जनिष्वा देववीतये
सर्वताता स्वस्तये ॥

7,1,20 यूयं पात स्वस्थिभिः सदानः ॥

10,7,1 स्वस्ति नो दिवो अग्ने पृथिव्या
विश्वायुर्धेहि यजथाय देव ।
सचेमहि तव दस्म ॥

One may note here that the two words सचस्व स्वस्तये coming together in the mantra we are considering (1,1,9) occur together in many passages in Ṛgveda (सचसे स्वस्ति ।) (cf. 4,11,6; सचसे स्वस्त्ये) 5,28,2; and (स्वस्ति...सचेमहि) 10,7,1). The expression 'sachasva' must therefore be taken in the sense of protecting the devotee so that the devotee's weal and welfare, success and prosperity are assured.

स ।	Therefore, Agni in whom we have sought refuge
नः ।	for us
पितेव सूनवे ।	like a father unto his own son
अग्ने ।	O Agni
सूपायनो भव ।	be the auspicious support; be of easy access
सचस्व ।	protect

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नः । us

स्वस्तये । for our weal and welfare, bliss and peace; happy state

स । एवमस्माभिः शरणं प्राप्तः । त्वं च । यतः त्वमस्माकं जीवनयज्ञस्य सत्य नेता । तथाभूतः त्वम् ।

नः । अस्माकम् । बहुवचनस्य वस्नस् (*Pāṇini,* 8,1,21)

पितेव सूनवे । पितुः पुत्रहितत्वेन प्रसिद्धत्वात् । पिता पाता । सूनोः सूपायनः । न केवलं पुत्रमात्राणां किन्तु पितोः औरससूनव इति भिन्नवाक्यतया युज्यते ।

अग्ने । तदन्तर्गतविष्णो ।

सूपायनो भव । अधिकरणे ल्युट् । सुप्रापः । सूपाश्रयः शोभनोपाश्रयो भव । उपेत्य अस्मिन्निति सूपायनः ।

सचस्वा । सच समवाय इत्यस्मा ल्लोट् मध्यमपुरुषैक वचनम् । तिङन्तस्यास्य सचस्व इति रूपः । सांहितिको दीर्घश्चान्दसः सचस्वा इति । रक्ष यथा रक्षणेन सन्ततसौख्यादिकं भवति तथा रक्ष (Jayatīrtha), षच् सेवने सेचने । सेचन्ते सेवन्ते । सचतेः सेवार्थत्त्वेऽपि इह तदयोगात् । सेवाया इत्युपलक्षणं वा सेचनं ग्राह्यम् ।

नः । अस्मान् ।

स्वस्तये । अस् भुवीति धात्वनुकार अस्तिरिति । सु अस्ति स्वस्ति । सम्यक्सत्ता । सु + अस्तये सुभूतिरित्यर्थः । सततसौख्याय सदा सम्यक्सत्त्वाय वा । सुपूर्वस्य सत्तावाचिनोऽस्तेः विभक्ति-प्रतिरूपकमव्ययम् । *(Msntrārtha-mañjari)* सम्यक् सत्त्वं सम्यक् सत्ता सम्यगवस्थानमित्यर्थः । सौख्यादिकमत्रादिपदेन सम्यक्सत्त्वं

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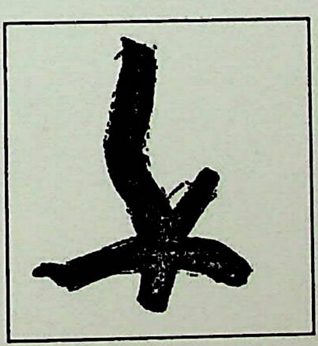
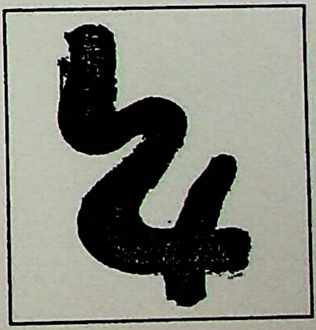
ग्राह्यम् । *(Padārtha-prakāśikā)* । सत्ताशच्चिनां सुखवाचित्वम् । *(Mantrārtha-mañjari)* । सद्भाववाच्चिनः शब्दाः । सततसौख्याय सदा सम्यक् सत्त्वाय वा सचस्व रक्ष । *(Ṛgbhashya-tīkā)* । अस् भुवीत्यतः सावसेरित्युणादिसूत्रेण सुशब्दे उपपदेति प्रत्ययविधानात् । मङ्गलतयास्तित्वाय ॥

(Here ends the minth mantra of the first sūkta in the first maṇḍala; and also the second varga in the first ashṭaka. The sūkta in the Gāyatri metre is addressed to Agni, and was seen by Madhuchchhandas of Viśvāmitra lineage.)

* * * *





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